THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

CHRISTINE, AND OTHER POEMS.

"But she calls on Christ, and the kerchief white
Waves full in the face of her foe!
Back with an oath reeled the Wizard Knight,
As his steed crouched low in the wondrous light
Of the Santo Sudario."

PAGE 102.

CHRISTINE:

A

TROUBADOUR'S SONG,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY
GEORGE H. MILES.

New-York:
LAWRENCE KEHOE,
145 NASSAU STREET.
1866.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1866, by

LAWRENCE KEHOE,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New-York.

PS
2393
M594c

CONTENTS.

	Page
CHRISTINE	7

POEMS.

Raphael Sanzio	137
A Card from the Violets	151
The Last Snow-Wreath	154
Marcella	157
She Will Return	163
"Under the Tree, Love"	166
San Sisto	171
The Albatross	175
Beatrice	179
La Velata	187
The Bird's Song	189
Inkermann	192
Donna	209
Blight and Bloom	212

762996

Page

Shemselnihar - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 215

Lazarus - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 217

The Ivory Crucifix - - - - - - - - - - - - 221

The King's Speech - - - - - - - - - - - - 229

Said the Rose - - - - - - - - - - - - - 235

SONGS.

Bertha - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 243

Fidelis - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 244

Lady Bird - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 246

She told Me Not to Love Her - - - - - - - - - 248

Oh! the Year has Lost its Light - - - - - - - - 249

There was a Time - - - - - - - - - - - - 251

Bill and I - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 253

Gabriel's Song - - - - - - - - - - - - - 257

A Lullaby - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 259

ALADDIN'S PALACE - - - - - - - - - - - - 263

PRELUDE.

There is an Angel whom I see in dreams.
The heavens break open and he takes his stand
Upon a cliff of shining adamant
Far in the furthest west. There bird-like poised,
With wings of snow wide arched and radiant head
For flight thrown forward, to his lips he lifts
A shining trumpet, gold, and like to those
Seen by Angelico in blessed vision;
Then slowly with unmoving pinion soars
Straight for the zenith. Not a star is shining,
Nor sun, nor moon, nor round his tranquil brow
The halo, nor the fire-trail at his feet.

The firmament is lighted from his eyes;
And all is still in ocean, air, and earth,
Save the far music which that trumpet makes.

There is a word in that far music couched,
Half lost and hidden in its melody:
Beauty or Duty which, or both in one?
For half the puzzled echoes answer 'Beauty,'
While half are still replying 'Duty, Duty.'
But once the zenith reached, the Seraph swings
One shining hand aloft in central heaven
And stamps in fire, with letters interlaced
In lustrous coils inseparably blent,
Two mystic words. And as he writes, and ere
The deep sky hides him in her heart, the last
Low echoes of that golden clarion sigh,
'Beauty and Duty, one eternally.'

Ladye, to thee the minstrel's song is sung.

CHRISTINE.

The Queen hath built her a fairy Bower
In the shadow of the Accursed Tower,
For the Moslem hath left his blood-stained lair,
And the banner of England waveth there.
Thither she lureth the Lion King
To hear a wandering Trovère sing;
For well she knew the Joyous Art
Was surest path to Richard's heart.
But the Monarch's glance was on the sea—
Sooth, he was scarce in minstrel mood,
For Philip's triremes homeward stood
With all the Gallic chivalry.
And as he watched the filmy sail
Upon the farthest billow fail,

He muttered, "Richard ill can spare
Thee and thy Templars, false and fair;
Yet God hath willed it—home to thee,
Death or Jerusalem for me!"
Then pressing with a knightly kiss
The peerless hand that slept in his,
"Ah, would our own Blondel were here
To try a measure I wove last e'en.
What songster hast thou caught, my Queen,
Whose harp may soothe a Monarch's ear?"
She beckoned, and the Trovère bowed
To many a Lord and Ladye fair
That gathered round the royal pair;
But most his simple song was vowed
To a sweet shape with dark brown hair,
Half hidden in the gentle crowd;
Pale as a spirit, sharply slender,
In maiden beauty's crescent splendor.
And never yet bent Minstrel knee
To Mistress lovelier than she.

The First Song.

THE FIRST SONG.

I.

Ye have heard of the Castle of Miolan
And how it hath stood since time began,
Midway to yon mountain's brow,
Guarding the beautiful valley below:
Its crest the clouds, its ancient feet
Where the Arc and the Isère murmuring meet.
Earth hath few lovelier scenes to show
Than Miolan with its hundred halls,
Its massive towers and bannered walls,
Looming out through the vines and walnut woods
That gladden its stately solitudes.

And there might ye hear but yestermorn
The loud halloo and the hunter's horn,
The laugh of mailèd men at play,
The drinking bout and the roundelay.
But now all is sternest silence there,
Save the bell that calls to vesper prayer ;
Save the ceaseless surge of a father's wail,
And, hark ! ye may hear the Baron's Tale.

II.

"Come hither, Hermit!—Yestermorn
I had an only son,
A gallant fair as e'er was born,
A knight whose spurs were won
In the red tide by Godfrey's side
At Ascalon.

"But yestermorn he came to me
For blessing on his lance,
And death and danger seemed to flee
The joyaunce of his glance,
For he would ride to win his Bride,
Christine of France.

"All sparkling in the sun he stood
In mail of Milan dressed,
A scarf, the gift of her he wooed,
Lay lightly o'er his breast,
As, with a clang, to horse he sprang
With nodding crest.

"Gaily he grasped the stirrup cup
Afoam with spicy ale,
But as he took the goblet up
Methought his cheek grew pale,
And a shudder ran through the iron man
And through his mail.

"Oft had I seen him breast the shock
Of squire or crownèd king,
His front was firm as rooted rock
When spears were shivering:
I knew no blow could shake him so
From living thing.

" 'Twas something near akin to death
That blanched and froze his cheek,
Yet 'twas not death for he had breath,
And when I bade him speak,
Unto his breast his hand he pressed
With one wild shriek.

" The hand thus clasped upon his heart
So sharply curbed the rein,
Grey Caliph, rearing with a start,
Went bounding o'er the plain
Away, away with echoing neigh
And streaming mane.

" After him sped the menial throng;
I stirred not in my fear;
Perchance I swooned, for it seemed not long
Ere the race did reappear,
And my son still led on his desert-bred,
Grasping his spear.

"Unchanged in look or limb, he came,
He and his barb so fleet,
His hand still on his heart, the same
Stern bearing in his seat,
And wheeling round with sudden bound
Stopped at my feet.

"And soon as ceased that wildering tramp
'What ails thee, boy?' I cried—
Taking his hand all chill and damp—
'What means this fearful ride?
Alight, alight, for lips so white
Would scare a Bride!'

"But sternly to his steed clove he,
And answer made he none,
I clasped him by his barbèd knee
And there I made my moan;
While icily he stared at me,
At me alone.

"A strange, unmeaning stare was that,
And a page beside me said,
'If ever corse in saddle sat,
Our lord is certes sped!'
But I smote the lad, for it drove me mad
To think him dead.

"What! dead so young, what! lost so soon,
My beautiful, my brave!
Sooner the sun should find at noon
In central heaven a grave!
Sweet Jesu, no, it is not so
When Thou canst save!

"For was he dead and was he sped,
When he could ride so well,
So bravely bear his plumèd head?
Or, was't some spirit fell
In causeless wrath had crossed his path
With fiendish spell?

" Oh, Hermit, 'twas a cruel sight,
And He, who loves to bless,
Ne'er sent on son such bitter blight,
On sire such sore distress,
Such piteous pass, and I, alas,
So powerless!

" They would have ta'en him from his horse
The while I wept and prayed,
They would have lain him like a corse
Upon a litter made
Of traversed spear and martial gear,
But I forbade.

" I gazed into his face again,
I chafed his hand once more,
I summoned him to speak, in vain—
He sat there as before,
While the gallant Grey in dumb dismay
His rider bore.

" Full well, full well Grey Caliph then
The horror seemed to know,
E'en deeper than my mailèd men
Methought he felt our woe;
For the barbèd head of the desert-bred
Was drooping low.

" Amazed, aghast, he gazed at me,
That mourner true and good,
Then backward at my boy looked he,
As if a word he sued,
And like sculptured pile in abbey aisle
The twain there stood.

" I took the rein: the frozen one
Still fast in saddle sate,
As tremblingly I led him on
Toward the great castle gate.
O walls mine own, why have ye grown
So desolate?—

"I led them to the castle gate
And paused before the shrine
Where throned in state from earliest date,
Protectress of our line,
Madonna pressed close to her breast
The Babe Divine.

"And kneeling lowly at her feet,
I begged the Mother mild
That she would sue her Jesu sweet
To aid my stricken child;
And the meek stone face flashed full of grace
As if she smiled.

"And methought the eyes of the Full of Grace
Upon my darling shone,
Till living seemed that marble face
And the living man seemed stone,
While a halo played round the Mother Maid
And round her Son.

"And there was radiance everywhere
Surpassing light of day,
On man and horse, on shield and spear
Burned the bright, blinding ray;
But most it shone on my only one
And his gallant Grey.

"A sudden clang of armor rang,
My boy lay on the sward,
Up high in air Grey Caliph sprang,
An instant fiercely pawed,
Then trembling stood aghast and viewed
His fallen lord.

"Then with the flash of fire away
Like sunbeam o'er the plain,
Away, away with echoing neigh
And wildly waving mane,
Away he sped, loose from his head
The flying rein.

"I watched the steed from pass to pass
Unto the welkin's rim,
I feared to turn my eyes, alas,
To trust a look at him;
And when I turned, my temples burned
And all grew dim.

"Sweet if such swoon could endless be,
Yet speedily I woke
And missed my boy: they showed him me
Full length on bed of oak,
Clad as 'twas meet in mail complete
And sable cloak.

"All of our race upon that bier
Had rested one by one,
I had seen my father lying there,
And now there lay my son!
Ah! my sick soul bled the while it said—
'Thy will be done!'

" Bright glanced the crest, bright gleamed the spur,
That well had played their part,
His lance still clasped, nor could they stir
His left hand from his heart;
There fast it clove, nor would it move
With all their art.

" I found no voice, I shed no tear,
They thought me well resigned.
All else who stood around the bier
With weeping much were blind;
And a mourning voice went through the house
Like a low wind.

" And there was sob of aged man
And woman's wailing cry,
All cheeks were wan, all eyes o'erran,
Yon fair-haired maidens sigh,
And one apart with breaking heart
Weeps bitterly.

"But sharper than spear-thrust, I trow,
Their wailing through me went;
Stern silence suited best my woe,
And, howe'er well the intent,
Their menial din seemed half akin
To merriment.

"For oh, such grief was mock to mine
Whose days were all undone,
The last of all this ancient line
To share whose grief was none!
Straight from the hall I barred them all
And stood alone.

"'Receive me now, thou bed of oak!'
I fell upon the bier,
And, Hermit, when this morning broke
It found me clinging there.
O maddening morn! That day dare dawn
On such a pair!

"I sent for thee, thou man of God,
To watch with me to-night;
My boy still liveth, by the rood,
Nor shall be funeral rite!—
But, Hermit, come: this is the room:
There lies the Knight!"

III.

But she apart
With breaking heart?—
That very yestermorn she stood
In the deepest shade of the walnut wood,
As a Knight rode by on his raven steed,
Crying, "Daughter mine, hast thou done the deed?
I gave thee the venom, I gave thee the spell,
A jealous heart might use them well."
But she waved her white arms and only said,
"On oaken bier is Miolan laid!"
"Dead!" laughed the Knight. "Then round Pilate's Peak
Let the red light burn and the eagle shriek.

When Miolan's heir lies on the bier,
Low is the only lance I fear:
I ride, I ride to win my Bride,
Ho, Eblis, to thy servant's side,
Thou hast sworn no foe
Shall lay me low
Till the dead in arms against me ride!"

The Second Song.

THE SECOND SONG.

I.

They passed into an ancient hall
With oaken arches spanned.
Full many a shield hung on the wall,
Full many a broken brand,
And barbèd spear and scimetar
From Holy Land.

And scarfs of dames of high degree
With gold and jewels rich,
And many a mouldered effigy
In many a mouldering niche,
Like grey sea shells whose crumbling cells
Bestrew the beach.

The sacred dead possessed the place,
  The silent cobweb wreathed
The tombs where slept that warrior race,
  With swords for ever sheathed:
You seemed to share the very air
    Which they had breathed.

Oh, darksome was that funeral room,
  Those oaken arches dim,
The torchlight, struggling through the gloom,
  Fell faint on effige grim,
On dragon dread and carvèd head
    Of Cherubim.

Of Cherubim fast by a shrine
  Whereon the last sad rite
Was wont for all that ancient line,
  For dame and belted knight—
A shrine of Moan which death alone
    Did ever light.

But light not now that altar stone
While hope of life remain,
Though darksome be that altar lone,
Unlit that funeral fane,
Save by the rays cast by the blaze
Of torches twain.

Of torches twain at head and heel
Of him who seemeth dead,
Who sleepeth so well in his coat of steel,
His cloak around him spread—
The young Knight fair, who lieth there
On oaken bed.

One hand still fastened to his heart,
The other on his lance,
While through his eyelids, half apart,
Life seemeth half to glance.
"Sweet youth awake, for Jesu's sake,
From this strange trance!"

But heed or answer there is none.
Then knelt that Hermit old;
To Mother Mary and her Son
Full many a prayer he told,
Whose wondrous words the Church records
In lettered gold:

And many a precious litany
And many a pious vow,
Then rising said, "If fiend it be,
That fiend shall leave thee now!"
And traced the sign of the Cross divine
On lips and brow.

As well expect yon cherub's wings
To wave at matin bell!
Not all the relics of the kings
Could break that iron spell.
"Pray for the dead, let mass be said,
Toll forth the knell!"

"Not yet!" the Baron gasped and sank
As if beneath a blow,
With lips all writhing as they drank
The dregs of deepest woe;
With eyes aglare, and scattered hair
Tossed to and fro.

So swings the leaf that lingers last
When wintry tempests sweep,
So reels when storms have stripped the mast
The galley on the deep,
So nods the snow on Eigher's brow
Before the leap.

Uncertain 'mid his tangled hair
His palsied fingers stray,
He smileth in his dumb despair
Like a sick child at play,
Though wet, I trow, with tears eno'
That beard so grey.

Oh, Hermit, lift him to your breast,
There best his heart may bleed;
Since none but heaven can give him rest,
Heaven's priest must meet his need:
Dry that white beard, now wet and weird
As pale sea-weed.

Uprising slowly from the ground,
With short and frequent breath,
In aimless circles, round and round,
The Baron tottereth
With trailing feet, a mourner meet
For house of death.

Till, pausing by the shrine of Moan,
He said, the while he wept,
"Here, Hermit, here mine only one,
When all the castle slept,
As maiden knight, o'er armor bright,
His first watch kept.

"This is the casque that first he wore,
And this his virgin shield,
This lance to his first tilt he bore,
With this first took the field—
How light, how lâche to that huge ash
He now doth wield!

"This blade hath levelled at a blow
The she-wolf in her den,
With this red falchion he laid low
The slippery Saracen.
God! will that hand, so near his brand,
Ne'er strike again?

"Frown not on him, ye men of old,
Whose glorious race is run;
Frown not on him, my fathers bold,
Though many the field ye won:
His name and los may mate with yours
Though but begun!

"Receive him, ye departed brave,
Unlock the gates of light,
And range yourselves about his grave
To hail a brother knight,
Who never erred in deed or word
Against the right!

"But is he dead and is he sped
Withouten scathe or scar?
Why, Hermit, he hath often bled
From sword and scimetar—
I've seen him ride, wounds gaping wide,
From war to war.

"And hath a silent, viewless thing
Laid danger's darling low,
When youth and hope were on the wing
And life in morning glow?
Not yonder worm in winter's storm
Perisheth so!

"Oh, Hermit, thou hast heard, I ween,
Of trances long and deep,
But, Hermit, hast thou ever seen
That grim and stony sleep,
And canst thou tell how long a spell
Such slumbers keep?

"Oh, be there naught to break the charm,
To thaw this icy chain;
Has Mother Church no word to warm
These freezing lips again;
Be holy prayer and balsams rare
Alike in vain?....

"A curse on thy ill-omened head;
Man, bid me not despair;
Churl, say not that a Knight is dead
When he can couch his spear;
When he can ride——Monk, thou hast lied.
He lives, I swear!

"Up from that bier! Boy, to thy feet!
Know'st not thy father's voice?
Thou ne'er hast disobeyed . . . is't meet
A sire should summon thrice?
By these grey hairs, by these salt tears,
Awake, arise!

"Ho, lover, to thy ladye flee,
Dig deep the crimson spur;
Sleep not 'twixt this lean monk and me
When thou shouldst kneel to her!
Oh 'tis a sin, Christine to win
And thou not stir!

"Ho, laggard, hear yon trumpet's note
Go sounding to the skies,
The lists are set, the banners float,
Yon loud-mouthed herald cries,
'Ride, gallant knights, Christine invites,
Herself the prize!'

"Ho, craven, shun'st thou the mêlée,
When she expects thy brand
To prove to-day in fair tourney
A title to her hand?
Up, dullard base, or by the mass
I'll make thee stand!" . . . .

Thrice strove he then to wrench apart
Those fingers from the spear,
Thrice strove to sever from the heart
The hand that rested there.
Thrice strove in vain with frantic strain
That shook the bier.

Thrice with the dead the living strove,
Their armor rang a peal,
The sleeping knight he would not move
Although the sire did reel:
That stately corse defied all force,
Stubborn as steel.

"Ay, dead, dead, dead!" the Baron cried;
"Dear Hermit, I did rave.
O were we sleeping side by side! . . .
Good monk, I penance crave
For all I said . . . . Ay, he is dead,
Pray heaven to save!

"Betake thee to thy crucifix,
And let me while I may
Rain kisses on these frozen cheeks
Before they know decay.
Leave me to weep and watch and keep
The worm at bay.

"Thou wilt not spare thy prayers, I trust;
But name not now the grave—
I'll watch him to the very dust! . . . .
So, Hermit, to thy cave,
Whilst here I cling lest creeping thing
Insult the brave!"

Why starts the Hermit to his feet,
Why springs he to the bier,
Why calleth he on Jesu sweet,
Staying the starting tear,
What whispereth he half trustfully
And half in fear?

"Sir Knight, thy ring hath razed his flesh—
'Twas in thy frenzy done;
Lo, from his wrist how fast and fresh
The blood-drops trickling run;
Heaven yet may wake, for Mary's sake,
Thy warrior son.

"Heap ashes on thy head, Sir Knight,
In sackcloth gird thee well,
The shrine of Moan must blaze in light,
The morning mass must swell;
Arouse from sleep the castle keep,
Sound every bell!"

They come, pale maid and mailèd man
They throng into the hall,
The watcher from the barbican,
The warder from the wall,
And she apart, with breaking heart,
The last of all.

"*Introibo! Introibo!*"
The morning mass begins;
"*Mea culpa! mea culpa!*"
Forgive us all our sins;
And the rapt Hermit chaunts with streaming eyes,
That seem to enter Paradise,
"*Gloria! Gloria!*"
The shrine of Moan had never known
That gladdest of all hymns.

II.

The fair-haired maiden standeth apart
In the chapel gloom, with breaking heart.
But a smile crept over her face as she said,
"The draught was well measured, I ween;
He liveth, thank Allah, but not to wed
His beautiful Christine.
No lance hath Miolan couched to-day:
Let the bride for the bridegroom watch and pray,
Till the lists shall hear the shriek
Of the Dauphin's daughter borne away
By the Knight of Pilate's Peak."

The Third Song.

THE THIRD SONG.

Fronting the vine-clad Hermitage,—
Its hoary turrets mossed with age,
Its walls with flowers and grass o'ergrown,—
A ruined Castle, throned so high
Its battlements invade the sky,
Looks down upon the rushing Rhone.
From its tall summits you may see
The sunward slopes of Côte Rotie
With its red harvest's revelry;
While eastward, midway to the Alpine snows,
Soar the sad cloisters of the Grande Chartreuse.

And here, 'tis said, to hide his shame,
The thrice accursed Pilate came;
And here the very rock is shown,
  Where, racked and riven with remorse,
  Mad with the memory of the Cross,
He sprang and perished in the Rhone.
'Tis said that certain of his race
Made this tall peak their dwelling place,
And built them there this castle keep
To mark the spot of Pilate's leap.
Full many the tale of terror told
  At eve, with changing cheek,
By maiden fair and stripling bold,
Of these dark keepers of the height
And, most of all, of the Wizard Knight,
  The Knight of Pilate's Peak.
His was a name of terror known
  And feared through all Provence;
Men breathed it in an undertone,
  With quailing eye askance,

Till the good Dauphin of Vienne,
And Miolan's ancient Lord,
One midnight stormed the robber den
And gave them to the sword;
All save the Wizard Knight, who rose
In a flame-wreath from his dazzled foes;
All save a child, with golden hair,
Whom the Lord of Miolan deigned to spare
In ruth to womanhood,
And she, alas, is the maiden fair
Who wept in the walnut wood.

But who is he, with step of fate,
Goes gloomily through the castle gate
In the morning's virgin prime?
Why scattereth he with frenzied hand
The fierce flame of that burning brand,
Chaunting an ancient rhyme?
The eagle, scared from her blazing nest,
Whirls with a scream round his sable crest.

What muttereth he with demon smile,
Shaking his mailèd hand the while
  Toward the Chateau of La Sône,
Where champing steed and bannered tent
Gave token of goodly tournament,
  And the Golden Dolphin shone?
"Woe to the last of the Dauphin's line,
When the eagle shrieks and the red lights shine
  Round the towers of Pilate's Peak!
Burn, beacon, burn!"—and as he spoke
From the ruined towers curled the pillared smoke,
As the light flame leapt from the ancient oak
  And answered the eagle's shriek.
Man and horse down the hillside sprang
And a voice through the startled forest rang—
  "I ride, I ride to win my bride.
  Ho, Eblis! to thy servant's side;
    Thou hast sworn no foe
    Shall lay me low
Till the dead in arms against me ride."

II.

Deliciously, deliciously
Cometh the dancing dawn,
Christine, Christine comes with it,
Leading in the morn.
Beautiful pair!
So cometh the fawn
Before the deer.
Christine is in her bower
Beside the swift Isère
Weaving a white flower
With her dark brown hair.
Never, O never,
Wandering river,
Though flowing for ever,

E'er shalt thou mirror
Maiden so fair!

Hail to thee, hail to thee,
Beautiful one;
Maiden to match thee,
On earth there is none.
And there is none to tell
How beautiful thou art;
Though oft the first Rudel
Has made the Princes start,
When he has strung his harp and sung
The Lily of Provence,
Till the high halls have rung
With clash of lifted lance
Vowed to the young
Christine of France.

Ah, true that he might paint
The blooming of thy cheek,

The blue vein's tender streak
On marble temple faint;
Lips in whose repose
Ruby weddeth rose,
Lips that parted show
Ambushed pearl below:
Or he may catch the subtle glow
Of smiles as rare as sweet,
May whisper of the drifted snow
Where throat and bosom meet,
And of the dark brown braids that flow
So grandly to thy feet.
Ah, true that he may sing
Thy wondrous mien,
Stately as befits a queen,
Yet light and lithe and all awing
As becometh Queen of air
Who glideth unstepping everywhere.
And he might number e'en
The charms that haunt thy drapery—

Charms that, ever changing, cluster
Round thy milk-white mantle's lustre,—
Maiden mantle that is part of thee,
Maiden mantle that doth circle thee
With the snows of virgin grace;
Halo-like around thee wreathing,
Spirit-like about thee breathing
The glory of thy face.

But these dark eyes, Christine?
Peace, poet, peace,
Cease, minstrel, cease!
But these dear eyes, Christine?
Mute, O mute
Be voice and lute!
O dear dark eyes that seem to dwell
With holiest things invisible,
Who may read your oracle?
Earnest eyes that seem to rove
Empyrean heights above,

Yet aglow with human love,
Who may speak your spell?
Dear dark eyes that beam and bless,
In whose luminous caress
Nature weareth bridal dress,—
Eyes of voiceless Prophetess,
Your meanings who may tell!
O there is none!
Peace, poet, peace,
Cease, minstrel, cease,
For there is none!
O eyes of fire without desire,
O stars that lead the sun!
But minstrel cease,
Peace, poet, peace,
Tame Troubadour be still;
Voice and lute
Alike be mute,
It passeth all your skill!

Sooth thou art fair,
O ladye dear,
Yet one may see
The shadow of the east in thee ;
Tinting to a riper flush
The faint vermilion of thy blush ;
Deepening in thy dark brown hair
Till sunshine sleeps in starlight there.
For she had scarce seen summers ten,
When erst the Hermit's call
Sent all true Knights from bower and hall
Against the Saracen.
Young, motherless, and passing fair,
The Dauphin durst not leave her there,
Within his castle lone,
To kinsman's cold or casual care,
Not such as were his own:
And so the sweet Provençal maid
Shared with her sire the first Crusade.

And you may hear her oft,
In accents strangely soft,
Still singing of the rose's bloom
  In Sharon,—of the long sunset
  That gilds lamenting Olivet,
Of eglantines that grace the gloom
  Of sad Gethsemane ;
And of a young Knight ever seen
In evening walks along the green
  That fringes feeble Siloë.

Young, beautiful, and passing fair—
The ancient Dauphin's only heir,
  The fairest flower of France,—
Knights by sea and Knights by land
Came to claim the fair white hand,
  With sigh and suppliant lance ;
    And many a shield
    Displayed afield
  The Lily of Provence.

Ladye love of prince and bard
Yet to one young Savoyard
Swerveless faith she gave—
To the young Knight ever seen
When moonlight wandered o'er the green
That gleams o'er Siloë's wave.
And he, blest boy, where lingers he?
For the Dauphin hath given slow consent
That, after a joyous tournament,
The stately spousals shall be.

Christine is in her bower
That blooms by the swift Isère,
Twining a white flower
With her dark brown hair.
The skies of Provence
Are bright with her glance,
And nature's matin organ floods
The world with music from the myriad throats
Of the winged Troubadours, whose joyous notes

Brighten the rolling requiem of the woods.
With melody, flowers, and light
Hath the maiden come to play,
As fragile, fair, and bright
And lovelier than they?
O no, she has come to her bower
That blooms by the dark Isère
For the bridegroom who named the first hour
Of day-dawn to meet her there:
But the bridal morn on the hills is born
And the bridegroom is not here.

Hie thee hither, Savoyard,
On such an errand youth rides hard.
Never knight so dutiful
Maiden failed so beautiful:
And she in such sweet need,
And he so bold and true!—
She will watch by the long green avenue
Till it quakes to the tramp of his steed;

Till it echoes the neigh of the gallant Grey
Spurred to the top of his speed.

In the dark, green, lonely avenue
The Ladye her love-watch keepeth,
Listening so close that she can hear
The very dripping of the dew
Stirred by the worm as it creepeth;
Straining her ear
For her lover's coming
Till his steed seems near
In the bee's far humming.
She stands in the silent avenue,
Her back to a cypress tree;
O Savoyard once bold and true,
Late bridegroom, where canst thou be?
Hark! o'er the bridge that spans the river
There cometh a clattering tread,
Never was shaft from mortal quiver
Ever so swiftly sped.

Onward the sound,
Bound after bound,
Leapeth along the tremulous ground.

From the nodding forest darting,
Leaves, like water, round them parting,
Up the long green avenue,
Horse and horseman burst in view.
Marry, what ails the bridegroom gay
That he strideth a coal black steed,
Why cometh he not on the gallant Grey
That never yet failed him at need?
Gone is the white plume, that clouded his crest,
And the love-scarf that lightly lay over his breast;
Dark is his shield as the raven's wing
To the funeral banquet hurrying.
Came ever knight in such sad array
On the merry morn of his bridal day?
The Ladye trembles, and well she may;
Saints, you would think him a fiend astray.

A plunge, a pause, and, fast beside her,
Stand the sable horse and rider.
Alas, Christine, this shape of wrath
In Palestine once crossed thy path;
His arm around thy waist, I trow,
To bear thee to his saddle-bow,
But thy Savoyard was there,
In time to save, tho' not to smite,
For the demon fled into the night
From Miolan's matchless heir.
Alas, Christine, that lance lies low—
Lies low on oaken bier!

Low bent the Wizard, till his plume
O'ershadowed her like falling doom:
She feels the cold casque touch her ear,
She hears the whisper, hollow, clear,—
"From Acre's strand, from Holy Land,
O'er mountain crag, through desert sand,

By land, by sea, I come for thee,
And mine ere sunset shalt thou be!
Dost know me, girl?"
The visor raises—
God, 'tis the Knight of Pilate's Peak!
As if in wildered dream she gazes,
Gazing as one who strives to shriek.
She cannot fly, or speak, or stir,
For that face of horror glares at her
Like a phantom fresh from hell.
She gave no answer, she made no moan;
Mute as a statue overthrown,
Her fair face cold as carvèd stone,
Swooning the maiden fell.

The sun has climbed the golden hills
And danceth down with the mountain rills.
Over the meadow the swift beams run
Lifting the flowers, one by one,

Sipping their chalices dry as they pass,
And kissing the beads from the bending grass
The Dauphin's chateau, grand and grey,
Glows merrily in the risen day;
His castle that seemeth ancient as earth,
Lights up like an old man in his mirth.
Through the forest old, the sunbeams bold
  Their glittering revel keep,
Till, in arrowy gold, on the chequered wold
  In glancing lines they sleep.
And one sweet beam hath found its way
To the violet bank where the Ladye lay.
O radiant touch! perchance so shone
The hand that woke the widow's son.

She sighs, she stirs; the death-swoon breaks;
  Life slowly fires those pallid lips;
And feebly, painfully, she wakes,
  Struggling through that dark eclipse.

Breathing fresh of Alpine snows,
Breathing sweets of summer rose,
Murmuring songs of soft repose,
The south wind on her bosom blows:
But she heeds it not, she hears it not;
  Fast she sits with steady stare,
  The dew-drops heavy on her hair,
  Her fingers clasped in dumb despair,
    Frozen to the spot:
While o'er her fierce and fixed as fate,
The fiend on his spectral war-horse sate.
A horrible smile through the visor broke,
And, quoth he,
    "I but watched till my Ladye woke.
Get thee a flagon of Shiraz wine,
For the lips must be red that answer mine!"
Cleaving the woods, like the wind he went,
His face o'er his shoulder backward bent,
Crying thrice—"We shall meet at the Tournament!"

Clasping the cypress overhead,
Christine rose from her fragrant bed,
And a prayer to Mother Mary sped.
Hold not those gleaming skies for her
The same unfailing Comforter?
And those two white winged cherubim,
She once had seen, when Christmas hymn
  Chimed with the midnight mass,
Scattering light through the chapel dim,
  Alive in the stainèd glass—
What fiend could harm a hair of her,
While those arching wings took care of her?
And our Ladye, Maid divine,
Mother round whose marble shrine
She wreathed the rose of Palestine
  So many sinless years,
Will not heaven's maiden-mother Queen
  Regard her daughter's tears?
Yes!—through the forest stepping slow,
Tranquil mistress of her woe,

Goeth the calm Christine ;
And but for yonder spot of snow
Upon each temple, none may know
How stern a storm hath been.
For never dawned a brighter day,
And the Ladye smileth on her way,
Greeting the blue-eyed morn at play
With earth in her spangled green.
A single cloud
Stole like a shroud
Forth from the fading mists that hid
The crest of each Alpine pyramid ;
Unmovingly it lingers over
The mountain castle of her lover;
While over Pilate's Peak
Hangs the grey pall of the sullen smoke,
Leaps the lithe flame of the ancient oak
And the eagle soars with a shriek.
Full well she knew the curse was near,
But that heart of hers had done with fear.

By St. Antoine, not steadier stands
  Mont Blanc's white head in winter's whirl
  Than that calm, fearless, smiling girl
With her bare brow upturned and firmly folded
    hands.

Back to her bower so fair
  Christine her way is wending;
Over the dark Isère
  Silently she's bending,
Thus communing with the stream,
As one who whispers in a dream:
"Waters that at sunset ran
Round the Mount of Miolan;
Stream, that binds my love to me,
Whisper where that lover be;
Wavelets mine, what evil things
Mingle with your murmurings;
Tell me, ere ye glide away,
Wherefore doth the bridegroom stay?

Hath the fiend of Pilate's Peak
Met him, stayed him, slain him?—speak!
Speak the worst a Bride may know,
God hath armed my soul for woe;
Touching heaven, the virgin snow
Is firmer than the rock below.
Lies my love upon his bier,
Answer, answer, dark Isère!
Hark, to the low voice of the river
Singing '*Thy love is lost for ever!*'
Weep with all thy icy fountains,
Weep, ye cold, uncaring mountains,
I have not a tear!
Stream, that parts my love from me,
Bear this bridal rose with thee;
Bear it to the happy hearted,
Christine and all the flowers have parted!"

They are coming from the castle,
A bevy of bright-eyed girls,

Some with their long locks braided,
Some with loose golden curls.
Merrily 'mid the meadows
They win their wilful way;
Winding through sun and shadow,
Rivulets at play.
Brows with white rosebuds blowing,
Necks with white pearl entwined,
Gowns whose white folds imprison
Wafts of the wandering wind.
The boughs of the charmèd woodland
Sing to the vision sweet,
The daisies that crouch in the clover
Nod to their twinkling feet.
They see Christine by the river,
And, deeming the bridegroom near,
They wave her a dewy rose-wreath
Fresh plucked for her dark brown hair.
Hand in hand tripping to meet her,
Birdlike they carol their joy,

Wedding soft Provençal numbers
To a dulcet old strain of Savoy.

THE GREETING.

Sister, standing at Love's golden gate,
Life's second door—
Fleet the maidentime is flying,
Friendship fast in love is dying,
Bridal fate doth separate
Friends evermore.

Pilgrim seeking with thy sandalled feet
The land of bliss;
Sire and sister tearless leaving,
To thy beckoning palmer cleaving—
Truant sweet, once more repeat
Our parting kiss.

Wanderer filling for enchanted isle
Thy dimpling sail;
Whither drifted, all uncaring,
So with faithful helmsman faring,
Stay and smile with us, awhile,
Before the gale.

Playmate, hark! for all that once was ours
Soon rings the knell:
Glade and thicket, glen and heather,
Whisper sacredly together;
Queen of ours, the very flowers
Sigh forth farewell.

Christine looked up, and smiling stood
Among the choral sisterhood:
But some who sprang to greet her, stayed
Tiptoe, with the speech unsaid;
And, each the other, none knew why,
Questioned with quick, wondering eye.

One by one, their smiles have flown,
No lip is laughing but her own ;
And hers, the frozen smile that wears
The glittering of unshed tears.
"Ye have sung for me, I will sing for ye,
My sisters fond and fair."
And she bent her head till the chaplet fell
Adown in the deep Isère.

THE REPLY.

Bring me no rose-wreath now :
But come when sunset's first tears fall,
When night-birds from the mountain call—
Then bind my brow.

Roses and lilies white—
But tarry till the glow-worms trail
Their gold-work o'er the spangled veil
Of falling night.

Twine not your garland fair
Till I have fallen fast asleep;
Then to my silent pillow creep
And leave it there—

There in the chapel yard!—
Come with twilight's earliest hush,
Just as day's last purple flush
Forsakes the sward.

Stop where the white cross stands.
You'll find me in my wedding suit,
Lying motionless and mute,
With folded hands.

Tenderly to my side:
The bridegroom's form you may not see
In the dim eve, but he will be
Fast by his bride.

Soft with your chaplet move,
And lightly lay it on my head:
Be sure you wake not with rude tread
My jealous love.

Kiss me, then quick away;
And leave us, in unwatched repose,
With the lily and the rose
Waiting for day!

But hark! the cry of the clamorous horn
Smites the bright stillness of the morn.
From moated wall, from festal hall
The banners beckon, the bugles call;
Already flames, in the lists unrolled
O'er the Dauphin's tent, the Dolphin gold.
A hundred knights in armor glancing,
Hurry afield with pennons dancing,

Each with a vow to splinter a lance
For Christine, the Lily of Provence.
"Haste!" cried Christine;
"Sisters, we tarry late,
Let not the tourney wait
For its Queen!"
And, toward the castle gate,
They take their silent way along the green.

The Fourth Song.

THE FOURTH SONG.

I.

Amid the gleam of princely war
Christine sat like the evening star,
Pale in the sunset's pageant bright,
A separate and sadder light.
O bitter task
To rear aloft that shining head,
While round thee, cruel whisperers ask—
"Marry, what aileth the Bridegroom gay?
The heralds have waited as long as they may,
Yet never a sign of the gallant Grey.
Is Miolan false or dead?"

II.

The Dauphin eyed Christine askance:
"We have tarried too long," quoth he;
"Doth the Savoyard fear the thrust of France?
By the Bride of Heaven, no laggard lance
Shall ever have guard of thee!"

You could see the depths of the dark eyes shine
And a glow on the marble cheek,
As she whispered, "Woe to the Dauphin's line
When the eagle shrieks and the red lights shine
Round the towers of Pilate's Peak."

She levelled her white hand toward the west,
Where the omen beacon shone;
And he saw the flame on the castle crest,
And a livid glare light the mountain's breast
Even down to the rushing Rhone.

Never braver lord in all the land
Than that Dauphin true and tried;
But the rein half fell from his palsied hand
And his fingers worked at the jewelled brand
That shook in its sheath at his side.

For it came with a curse from earliest time,
It was carved on his father's halls,
It had haunted him ever from clime to clime,
And at last the red light of the ancient rhyme
Is burning on Pilate's walls!

Yet warrior-like beneath his feet
Trampling the sudden fear,
He cried, "Let thy lover's foot be fleet—
If thy Savoyard would wed thee, sweet,
By Saint Mark, he were better here!

"For I know by yon light there is danger near,
And I swear by the Holy Shrine,

Be it virgin spear or Miolan's heir,
The victor to-day shall win and wear
This menaced daughter of mine!"

The lists are aflame with the gold and steel
Of knights in their proud array,
And gong and tymbalon chiming peal
As forward the glittering squadrons wheel
To the jubilant courser's neigh.

The Dauphin sprang to the maiden's side,
And thrice aloud cried he,
"Ride, gallants all, for beauty ride,
Christine herself is the victor's bride,
Whoever the victor be!"

And thrice the heralds cried it aloud,
While a wondering whisper ran
From the central lists to the circling crowd,
For all knew the virgin hand was vowed
To the heir of Miolan.

Quick at the Dauphin's plighted word
Full many an eye flashed fire,
Full many a knight took a truer sword,
Tried buckle and girth, and many a lord
Chose a stouter lance from his squire.

Back to the barrier's measured bound
Each gallant speedeth away;
Then, forward fast to the trumpet's sound,
A hundred horsemen shake the ground
And meet in the mad melée.

Crimson the spur and crimson the spear,
The blood of the brave flows fast;
But Christine is deaf to the dying prayer,
Blind to the dying eyes that glare
On her as they look their last.

She sees but a Black Knight striking so well
That the bravest shun his path;

His name or his nation none may tell,
But wherever he struck a victim fell
At the feet of that shape of wrath.

"'Fore God," quoth the Dauphin, "that unknown sword
Is making a merry day!"
But where, oh where is the Savoyard,
For low in the slime of that trampled sward
Lie the flower of the Dauphinée!

And the victor stranger rideth alone,
Wiping his bloody blade;
And now that to meet him there is none,
Now that the warrior work is done,
He moveth toward the maid.

Sternly, as if he came to kill,
Toward the damsel he turneth his rein;

His trumpet sounding a challenge shrill,
While the fatal lists of La Sône are still
As he paces the purple plain.

A hollow voice through the visor cried,
"Mount to the crupper with me.
Mount, Ladye, mount to thy master's side,
For 'tis said and 'tis sworn thou shalt be the Bride
Of the victor, whoever he be."

At sound of that voice a sudden flame
Shot out from the Dauphin's eyes,
And he said, "Sir Knight, ere we grant thy claim,
Let us see the face, let us hear the name,
Of the gallant who winneth the prize."

"'Tis a name you know and a face you fear,"
The Wizard Knight began;

"Or hast thou forgotten that midnight drear,
When my sleeping fathers felt the spear
Of Vienne and Miolan?

"Ay, quiver and quail in thy coat of mail,
For hark to the eagle's shriek;
See the red light burns for the coming bale!"
And all knew as he lifted his aventayle
The Knight of Pilate's Peak.

From the heart of the mass rose a cry of wrath
As they sprang at the shape abhorred,
But he swept the foremost from his path,
And the rest fell back from the fatal swath
Of that darkly dripping sword.

But uprose the Dauphin brave and bold,
And strode out upon the green,

And quoth he, "Foul fiend, if my purpose
hold,
By my halidome, tho' I be passing old,
We'll splinter a lance for Christine.

"Since her lovers are low or recreant,
Her champion shall be her sire;
So get a fresh lance from yonder tent,
For though my vigor be something spent
I fear neither thee nor thy fire!"

Swift to the stirrup the Dauphin he sprang,
The bravest and best of his race:
No bugle blast for the combat rang;
Save the clattering hoof and the armor
clang,
All was still as each rode to his place.

With the crash of an April avalanche
They meet in that merciless tilt;

Back went each steed with shivering haunch,
Back to the croup bent each rider staunch,
Shivered each spear to the hilt.

Thrice flies the Baron's battle-axe round
The Wizard's sable crest;
But the coal-black steed, with a sudden bound,
Hurled the old Crusader to the ground,
And stamped on his mailèd breast.

Thrice by the vengeful war-horse spurned,
Lowly the Dauphin lies;
While the Black Knight laughed as again he turned
Toward the lost Christine, and his visor burned
As he gazed at his beautiful prize.

Her doom you might read in that gloating stare,
But no fear in the maid can you see;

Nor is it the calm of a dumb despair,
For hope sits aglow on her forehead fair,
And she murmurs, "At last—it is he!"

Proudly the maiden hath sprung from her seat,
Proudly she glanceth around,
One hand on her bosom to stay its beat,
For hark! there's a sound like the flying feet
Of a courser, bound after bound.

Clearing the lists with a leopard-like spring,
Plunging at top of his speed,
Swift o'er the ground as a bird on the wing,
There bursts, all afoam, through the wondering ring,
A gallant but riderless steed.

Arrow-like straight to the maiden he sped,
With a long, loud, tremulous neigh,

The rein flying loose round his glorious head,
While all whisper again, "Is the Savoyard dead?"
As they gaze at the riderless Grey.

One sharp, swift pang thro' the virgin heart,
One wildering cry of woe,
Then fleeter than dove to her calling nest,
Lighter than chamois to Malaval's crest
She leaps to the saddle bow.

"Away!" He knew the sweet voice; away,
With never a look behind;
Away, away, with echoing neigh
And streaming mane, goes the gallant Grey,
Like an eagle before the wind.

They have cleared the lists, they have passed her bower,
And still they are thundering on;

They are over the bridge—another hour,
A league behind them the Leaning Tower
And the spires of Saint Antoine.

Away, away in their wild career
Past the slopes of Mont Surjèu;
Thrice have they swum the swift Isère,
And firm and clear in the purple air
Soars the Grand Som full in view.

Rough is their path and sternly steep,
Yet halting never a whit,
Onward the terrible pace they keep,
While the good Grey, breathing free and deep,
Steadily strains at the bit.

They have left the lands where the tall hemp springs,
Where the clover bends to the bee;

They have left the hills where the red vine
flings
Her clustered curls of a thousand rings
Round the arms of the mulberry tree.

They have left the lands where the walnut
lines
The roads, and the chestnuts blow;
Beneath them the thread of the cataract shines,
Around them the plumes of the warrior pines,
Above them the rock and the snow.

Thick on his shoulders the foam flakes lay,
Fast the big drops roll from his chest,
Yet on, ever on, goes the gallant Grey,
Bearing the maiden as smoothly as spray
Asleep on the ocean's breast.

Onward and upward, bound after bound,
By Bruno's Bridge he goes;

And now they are treading holy ground,
For the feet of her flying Caliph sound
By the cells of the Grand Chartreuse.

Around them the darkling cloisters frown,
The sun in the valley hath sunk;
When right in her path, lo! the long white gown,
The withered face and the shaven crown
And the shrivelled hand of a monk.

A light like a glittering halo played
Round the brow of the holy man;
With lifted finger her course he stayed,
"All is not well," the pale lips said,
"With the heir of Miolan.

"But in Chambery hangs a relic rare
Over the altar stone:

Take it, and speed to thy Bridegroom's bier;
If the Sacristan question who sent thee there,
Say, 'Bruno, the Monk of Cologne.'"

She bent to the mane while the cross he signed
Thrice o'er the suppliant head:
"Away with thee, child!" and away like the wind
She went, with a startled glance behind,
For she heard an ominous tread.

The moon is up, 'tis a glorious night,
They are leaving the rock and the snow,
Mont Blanc is before her, phantom white,
While the swift Isère, with its line of light,
Cleaves the heart of the valley below.

But hark to the challenge, "Who rideth alone?"—
"O warder, bid me not wait!—

My lover lies dead and the Dauphin o'er-
thrown—
A message I bear from the Monk of Co-
logne"—
And she swept thro' Chambery's gate.

The Sacristan kneeleth in midnight prayer
By Chambery's altar stone.
"What meaneth this haste, my daughter fair?"
She stooped and murmured in his ear
The name of the Monk of Cologne.

Slowly he took from its jewelled case
A kerchief that sparkled like snow,
And the Minster shone like a lighted vase
As the deacon unveiled the gleaming face
Of the Santo Sudário.

A prayer, a tear, and to saddle she springs,
Clasping the relic bright;

Away; away, for the fell hoof rings
Down the hillside behind her—God give her wings!
The fiend and his horse are in sight.

On, on, the gorge of the Doriat's won,
She is nearing her Savoyard's home,
By the grand old road where the warrior son
Of Hanno swept with his legions dun,
On his mission of hatred to Rome.

The ancient oaks seem to rock and reel
As the forest rushes by her,
But nearer cometh the clash of steel,
And nearer falleth the fatal heel,
With its flickering trail of fire.

Then first the brave young heart grew sick
'Neath its load of love and fear,

For the Grey is breathing faint and quick,
And his nostrils burn and the drops fall thick
From the point of each drooping ear.

His glorious neck hath lost its pride,
His back fails beneath her weight,
While steadily gaining, stride by stride,
The Black Knight thunders to her side—
Heaven, must she meet her fate?

She shook the loose rein o'er the trembling head,
She laid her soft hand on his mane,
She called him her Caliph, her desert-bred,
She named the sweet springs where the palm trees spread
Their arms o'er the burning plain.

But the Grey looked back and sadly scanned
The maid with his earnest eyes—

A moment more and her cheek is fanned
By the black steed's breath, and the demon hand
Stretches out for the virgin prize.

But she calls on Christ, and the kerchief white
Waves full in the face of her foe:
Back with an oath reeled the Wizard Knight
As his steed crouched low in the wondrous light
Of the Santo Sudario.

Blinded they halt while the maiden hies,
The murmuring Arc she can hear,
And, lo! like a cloud on the shining skies,
Atop of yon perilous precipice,
The castle of Miolan's Heir.

"Fail not, my steed!"—Round her Caliph's head
The relic shines like the sun:

Leap after leap up the spiral steep,
He speeds to his master's castle keep,
And his glorious race is won.

"Ho, warder!"—At sight of the gallant Grey
The drawbridge thundering falls:
Wide goes the gate at that jubilant neigh,
And, glory to God for his mercy to-day,
She is safe within Miolan's walls.

The Fifth Song.

THE FIFTH SONG.

I.

In the dim grey dawn by Miolan's gate
The fiend on his wizard war-horse sate.
The fair-haired maid at his trumpet call
Creeps weeping and wan to the outer wall:
"My curse on thy venom, my curse on thy spell,
They have slain the master I loved too well.
Thou saidst he should wake when the joust was o'er,
But oh, he never will waken more!"
She tore her fair hair, while the demon laughed,
Saying, "Sound was the sleep that thy lover quaffed;
But bid the warder unbar the gate,
That the lost Christine may meet her fate."

II.

"Hither, hither thou mailèd man
With those woman's tears in thine eyes,
With thy brawny cheek all wet and wan,
Show me the heir of Miolan,
Lead where my Bridegroom lies."

And he led her on with a sullen tread,
That fell like a muffled groan,
Through halls as silent as the dead,
'Neath long grey arches overhead,
Till they came to the shrine of Moan.

What greets her there by the torches' glare?
In vain hath the mass been said!
Low bends the sire in mute despair,
Low kneels the Hermit in silent prayer,
Between them the mighty dead.

No tear she shed, no word she spoke,
But gliding up to the bier,
She took her stand by the bed of oak
Where her Savoyard lay in his sable cloak,
His hand still fast on his spear.

She bent her burning cheek to his,
And rested it there awhile,
Then touched his lips with a lingering kiss,
And whispered him thrice, "My love, arise,
I have come for thee many a mile!"

The man of God and the ancient Knight
Arose in tremulous awe;
She was so beautiful, so bright,
So spirit-like in her bridal white,
It seemed in the dim funereal light
'Twas an angel that they saw.

"Thro' forest fell, o'er mount and dell,
Like the falcon, hither I've flown,
For I knew that a fiend was loose from hell,
And I bear a token to break this spell
From Bruno, the Monk of Cologne.

"Dost thou know it, love? when fire and sword
Flamed round the Holy Shrine,
It was won by thee from the Paynim horde,
It was brought by thee to Bruno's guard,
A gift from Palestine.

"Wake, wake, my love! In the name of Grace,
That hath known our uttermost woe,
Lo! this thorn-crowned brow on thine I place!"
And, once more revealed, shone the wondrous face
Of the Santo Sudario.

At once over all that ancient hall
There went a luminous beam;

Heaven's deepest radiance seemed to fall,
The helmets shine on the shining wall,
And the faded banners gleam.

And the chime of hidden cymbals rings
To the song of a cherub choir;
Each altar angel waves his wings,
And the flame of each altar taper springs
Aloft in a luminous spire.

And over the face of the youth there broke
A smile both stern and sweet;
Slowly he turned on the bed of oak,
And proudly folding his sable cloak
Around him, sprang to his feet.

Back shrank the sire, half terrified,
Both he and the Hermit, I ween;

But she—she is fast to her Savoyard's side,
A poet's dream, a warrior's bride,
His beautiful Christine.

Her hair's dark tangles all astray
Adown her back and breast;
The print of the rein on her hand still lay,
The foam-flakes of the gallant Grey
Scarce dry on her heaving breast.

She told the dark tale and how she spurred
From the Knight of Pilate's Peak;
You scarce would think the Bridegroom heard,
Save that the mighty lance-head stirred,
Save for the flush in his cheek;

Save that his gauntlet clasped her hair—
And oh, the look that swept

Between them!—all the radiant air
Grew holier—it was like a prayer—
And they who saw it wept.

E'en the lights on the altar brighter grew
In the gleam of that heavenly gaze;
The cherub music fell soft as dew,
The breath of the censer seemed sweeter too,
The torches mellowed their requiem hue,
And burnt with a bridal blaze.

And the Baron clasps his son with a cry
Of joy as his sorrows cease;
While the Hermit, wrapt in his Rosary,
Feels that the world beneath the sky
Hath yet its planet of peace.

But hark! by the drawbridge, shrill and clear,
A trumpet's challenge rude;

The heart of Christine grew faint with fear,
But the Savoyard shook his mighty spear,
And the blood in his forehead stood.

"Beware, beware, 'tis the Fiend!" quoth she:
"Whither now?" asks the ancient Knight,
"What meanest thou, boy?—Leave the knave to me:
Wizard, or fiend, or whatever he be,
By the bones of my fathers, he shall flee
Or ne'er look on morning light.

"What, thou just risen from the grave,
Atilt with an armèd man?
Dost dream that youth alone is brave,
Dost deem these sinews too old to save
The honor of Miolan?"

But the youth he answered with gentlest tone,
"I know thee a warrior staunch,

But this meeting is meant for me alone.
Unhand me, my lord, have I woman grown?
Wouldst stop the rushing of the Rhone,
Or stay the avalanche?"

He broke from his sire as breaks the flash
From the soul of the circling storm:
You could hear the grasp of his gauntlet crash
On his quivering lance and the armor clash
Round that tall young warrior form.

"Be this thy shield?" the maiden cried,
Her hand on the kerchief of snow;
"If forth to the combat thou wilt ride,
Face to face be the Fiend defied
With the Santo Sudario!"

But the young Knight laid the relic rare
On the ancient altar-stone;

"Holy weapons to men of prayer,
Lance in rest and falchion bare
Must answer for Miolan's son."

Again the challenger's trumpet pealed
From the barbican, shrill and clear;
And the Savoyard reared his dinted shield
Its motto, gold on an azure field—
"ALLES ZU GOTT UND IHR."

To horse! — From the hills the dawning day
Looks down on the sleeping plain;
In the court-yard waiteth the gallant Grey,
And the castle rings with a joyous neigh
As the Knight and his steed meet again.

And the coal-black charger answers him
From the space beyond the gate,

From the level space, where dark and dim
In the morning mists, like giant grim,
The Fiend on his war-horse sate.

Oh, the men at arms how they stared aghast
When the Heir of Miolan leapt
To saddle-bow sounding his bugle-blast;
How the startled warder breathless gasped,
How the hoary old seneschal wept!

And the fair-haired maid with a sob hath sprung
To the lifted bridle rein;
Fast to his knee her white arms clung,
While the waving gold of her fair hair hung
Mixed with Grey Caliph's mane.

"O Miolan's heir, O master mine,
O more than heaven adored,

Live to forget this slave of thine,
Wed the dark-eyed Maid of Palestine,
But dare not yon demon sword!"

But the Baron thundered, "Off with the slave!"
And they tore the white arms away,
"A woman's a curse in the path of the brave;
Level thy lance and upon the knave,
For he laughs at this fool delay!

"But pledge me first in this beaker bright
Of foaming Cyprian wine;
Thou hast fasted, God wot, like an anchorite,
Thy cheeks and brow are a trifle white,
And, 'fore heaven, thou shall bear thee in this fight
As beseemeth son of mine!"

The youth drank deep of the burning juice
Of the mighty Marètel,

Then, waving his hand to his Ladye thrice,
Swifter than snow from the precipice,
Spurred full on the infidel.

"O Bridegroom bold, beware my brand!"
The Knight of Pilate cries,
"For 'tis written in blood by Eblis' hand,
No mortal might may mine withstand
Till the dead in arms arise."

"The dead are up, and in arms arrayed,
They have come at the call of fate:
Two days, two nights, as thou know'st, I've laid
On oaken bier"—and again there played
That halo light round the Mother Maid
In the niche by the castle gate.

Each warrior reared his shining targe,
Each plumèd helmet bent,

Each lance thrown forward for the charge,
Each steed reined back to the very marge
Of the mountain's sheer descent.

The rock beneath them seemed to groan
And shudder as they met;
Away the splintered lance is thrown,
Each falchion in the morning shone,
One blade uncrimsoned yet.

But the blood must flow and that blade must glow
E'er their deadly work be done;
Steel rang to steel, blow answered blow,
From dappled dawn till the Alpine snow
Grew red in the risen sun.

The Bridegroom's sword left a lurid trail,
So fiercely and fleetly it flew;

It rang like the rattling of the hail,
And wherever it fell the sable mail
Was wet with a ghastly dew.

The Baron, watching with stern delight,
Felt the heart in his bosom swell;
And quoth he, "By the mass, a gallant sight!
These old eyes have gazed on many a fight,
But, boy, as I live, never saw I knight
Who did his devoir so well!"

And oh, the flush o'er his face that broke,
The joy of his shining eyes,
When, backward beaten, stroke by stroke,
The Wizard reeled, like a falling oak,
Toward the edge of the precipice.

On the trembling verge of that perilous steep
The demon stood at bay,

Calling with challenge stern and deep,
That startled the inmost castle keep,
"Daughter of mine, here's a dainty leap
We must take together to-day.

"Come, maiden, come!" Swift circling round,
Like bird in the serpent's gaze,
She sprang to his side with a single bound,
While the black steed trampled the flinty ground
To fire, his nostrils ablaze.

"Farewell!" went the fair-haired maiden's cry,
Shrilling from hill to hill;
"Farewell, farewell, it was I, 'twas I,
Who sinned in a jealous agony,
But I loved thee too well to kill!"

High reared the steed with the hapless pair,
A plunge, a pause, a shriek,
A black plume loose in the middle air,

A foaming plash in the dark Isère,—
Thus vanished for ever the maiden fair
And the Knight of Pilate's Peak.

A mighty cheer shook the ancient halls,
A white hand waved in the sun,
The vassals all on the outer wall
Clashed their arms at the brave old Baron's call,
"To my arms, mine only one!"

But oh, what aileth the gallant Grey,
Why droopeth the barbèd head?
Slowly he turned from that fell tourney
And proudly breathing a long, last neigh,
At the castle gate fell dead.

III.

Lost to all else, forgotten e'en
The dark eyes of his dear Christine,
His fleet foot from the stirrup freed,
The Knight knelt by his fallen steed.
Awhile with tone and touch of love
To cheer him to his feet he strove:
Awhile he shook the bridle-rein—
That glazing eye!—alas, in vain.
Bareheaded on that fatal field,
His gauntlet ringing on his shield,
His voice a torrent deep and strong,
The warrior's soul broke forth in song.

THE KNIGHT'S SONG.

And art thou, *art* thou dead?—
Thou with front that might defy
The gathered thunders of the sky,
Thou before whose fearless eye
All death and danger fled!

My Khalif, hast thou sped
Homeward where the palm-trees' feet
Bathe in hidden fountains sweet,
Where first we met as lovers meet,
My own, my desert-bred!

Thy back has been my home;
And, bending o'er thy flying neck,

Its white mane waving without speck,
I seemed to tread the galley's deck,
And cleave the ocean's foam.

Since first I felt thy heart
Proudly surging 'neath my knee,
As earthquakes heave beneath the sea,
Brothers in the field were we;
And must we, *can* we part?

To match thee there was none!
The wind was laggard to thy speed:
O God, there is no deeper need
Than warrior's parted from his steed
When years have made them one.

And shall I never more
Answer thy laugh amid the clash

Of battle, see thee meet the flash
Of spears with the proud, pauseless dash
  Of billows on the shore?

  And all our victor war,
And all the honors men call mine,
Were thine, thou voiceless warrior, thine;
My task was but to touch the rein—
  There needed nothing more.

  Worst danger had no sting
For thee, and coward peace no charm;
Amid red havoc's worst alarm
Thy swoop as firm as through the storm
  The eagle's iron wing.

  O more than man to me!
Thy neigh outsoared the trumpet's tone,

Thy back was better than a throne,
There was no human thing save one
I loved as well as thee!

O Knighthood's truest friend!
Brave heart by every danger tried,
Proud crest by conquest glorified,
Swift saviour of my menaced Bride,
Is this, is *this* the end?—

Thrice honored be thy grave!
Wherever knightly deed is sung,
Wherever minstrel harp is strung,
There too thy praise shall sound among
The beauteous and the brave.

And thou shalt slumber deep
Beneath our chapel's cypress sheen;

And there thy lord and his Christine
Full oft shall watch at morn and e'en
Around their Khalif's sleep.

There shalt thou wait for me
Until the funeral bell shall ring,
Until the funeral censer swing,
For I would ride to meet my King,
My stainless steed, with thee!

The song has ceased, and not an eye
'Mid all those mailèd men is dry;
The brave old Baron turns aside
To crush the tear he cannot hide.
With stately step the Bridegroom went
To where, upon the battlement,
Christine herself, all weeping, leant.

Well might that crested warrior kneel
At such a shrine, well might he feel
As if the angel in her eyes
Gave all that hallows Paradise.
And when her white hands' tender spell
Upon his trembling shoulder fell,
Upward one reverent glance he cast,
Then, rising, murmured, "Mine at last!"

"Yes, thine at last!" Still stained with blood,
The Dauphin's self beside them stood.
"Fast as mortal steed could flee,
My own Christine, I followed thee.
Saint George, but 'twas a gallant sight
That miscreant hurled from yonder height:
Brave boy, that single sword of thine,
Methinks, might hold all Palestine.
But see, from out the shrine of Moan
Cometh the good Monk of Cologne,

Bearing the relic rare that woke
Our warrior from his bed of oak.
See him pass with folded hands
To where the shaded chapel stands.
The Bridegroom well hath won the prize,
There stands the priest, and there the altar lies."

IV.

When the moon rose o'er lordly Miolan
That night, she wondered at those ancient walls:
Bright tapers flashing from a hundred halls
Lit all the mountain—liveried vassals ran
Trailing from bower to bower the wine-cup, wreathed
With festal roses—viewless music breathed
A minstrel melody, that fell as falls
The dew, less heard than felt; and maidens laughed,
Aiming their curls at swarthy men who quaffed
Brimmed beakers to the newly wed: while some
Old henchmen, lolling on the court-yard green
Over their squandered Cyprus, vowed between
Their cups, "there was no pair in Christendom
To match their Savoyard and his Christine?"

The Trovère ceased: none praised the lay,—
Each waited to hear what the King would say.
But the grand blue eye was on the wave,
Little recked he of the tuneless stave:
He was watching a bark just anchored fast
With England's banner at her mast,
And quoth he to the Queen, "By my halidome,
I wager our Bard Blondel hath come!"
E'en as he spoke, a joyous cry
From the beach proclaimed the Master nigh;
But the merry cheer rose merrier yet
When the Monarch and his Minstrel met,
The Prince of Song and Plantagenet.
"A song!" cried the King. "Thou art just in time
To rid our ears of a vagrant's rhyme:
Prove how that recreant voice of thine
Hath thriven at Cyprus, bard of mine!"
The Minstrel played with his golden wrest,
And began the "*Fytte of the Bloody Vest.*"

The vanquished Trovère stole away
Unmarked by lord or ladye gay:
Perchance one quick, kind glance he caught,
Perchance that glance was all he sought.
For when Blondel would pause to tune
His harp and supplicate the moon,
It seemed as tho' the laughing sea
Caught up the vagrant melody;
And far along the listening shore,
Till every wave the burthen bore,
In long, low echoes might you hear—
"*Alles, Alles zu Gott und Ihr!*"

Poems.

RAPHAEL SANZIO.

KEEP to the lines—strain not a hair beyond:
Nature must hold her laws e'en against Hell.
There you o'ershoot the mark an inch—you paint
A lie a minute. Giulio, keep the lines—
The lines—*my* lines! They tell the very worst
The devil can do with flesh—let Angelo
Do more. I want no second Spasimo,
No miracles of muscle: on the Mount
Is miracle enough—the radiant change
Of man to Deity: no need to make
The boy a fiend outright—for see you not
Though God's own likeness lives there in his Son,
Ours is not lost. So keep the lines, nor hope
To mend their meaning. Wrong again? Hence forth

Reserve your brush to gild the booth, or deck
Street corners. Friends, forsooth—*you* Raphael's
friend—
And yet you will not keep my lines—the last
This hand shall ever trace?—By Bacchus, Sir,
It had made the hot blood of old Pietro boil
Had I e'er crazed his purpose so. Have done
With this: your lampblack darkens all the air.
Must you o'erride me with that wild, coarse
soul
Of yours? My hand is still upon the rein:
There's time enough to run your fiery race
When I am gone? Why, what a burst of
tears!
I am not dying: wherefore do you stare,
With such a frightened love, into my face?
Your hand all palsied? Ah, I see it now—
You feel too much for me, to feel for art.
Forgive my first unkindness: by and by,
When I am out of sight, and manly grief

Has done with tear and tremor—then, some day,
When your good hand is steady and you feel
The stirring of the true God—to your brush,
And keep my lines!

This is my birthday, Giulio;
The last one here—the first, perhaps, in Heaven,
With our dear Angels. 'Twas a grain too much,
That brief about restoring ancient Rome:
His Holiness and I, we both forgot
Raphael was human. Princely favor, sometimes,
Falls overheavy, like the Sabine bracelet.
For those damp vaults—their chill struck to my heart
Like the sharp finger of a skeleton,
While all the caverned ruin whispered out
"Behold the end!" Too soon, I thought,—but God

Thinks best. I do not wish to die—should like
To last a little longer, just to see
That picture finished, and to have our work
Judged in the peopled halls, swung side by side,
Michael's and mine! But do not turn your head—
Sit closer. Giulio, men have said I slumbered
Over those later frescos and the walls
Of Agostino—they are right, I did.
But slumbering there in whitest arms, I learned,
'Mid all those Nymphs and Graces, this one truth—
The inspiration of the nude is over:
The Christian Muse is draped.—Tell Michael so,
When next you find him busy with his Torso.
How then that bare Demoniac, do you ask?
Was't not an artist's thought—the double change
Of man to God above, to fiend below?
And then the instant the redeeming foot

Forsakes the earth, to loose the naked devil
Flaunting the scared Apostles? Who shall say
Art called not for my boy? Yet thrice as loud
As art, called Raphael! For myself alone
I drew him, every quivering muscle mapped
By the infernal strain, that I might hush
Those sneers of Angelo's,—for I had plucked
His surgeon secrets from the grave, and meant
To mate him where he's matchless. I have waited
The coming of that moment when we feel
The hand is surest, the brain clearest—when
Our dreams at once are deeds—when upward goes
The curtain from the clouded soul, and art
Flames all her unveiled Paradise upon us.
Patiently, trustingly that well-known hour
I've waited—and, at last, it comes—too late!
For now, you see, 'tis hard to reach my hand

To your sleek curls, and my poor head seems
chained
To this hot pillow. Had I now a tithe
Of half the strength I fooled on Chigi's walls,
I'd make the demon in that youth discourse
Anatomy enough to cram the schools
Till doomsday. Heaven, how plainly there
Your work stands off from mine! Quick with
your arm—
I feel the ancient power—give me the colors—
I and my picture, let us once more meet!
God let me finish it! Can you not stir
My bed with those stout shoulders? Then lift
me—
Child's play you'll find it—my weak, woman's
frame
Never weighed much—a breath can float it
now.
Do as I bid you, boy, I am not mad:
'Tis not delirium, but returning life.

O for the blood that barber's lancet stole!—
So—nearer—nearer——

——I was dreaming, Giulio,
That I had finished it, and that it hung
Beside their Lazarus; I and Angelo
Together stood—a little farther off,
That pack-horse colorist of his from Venice.
There stood we in the light of yonder face,
I and my rival, till, asudden, shone
A look of love in the small hazel eyes,
And down the double pointed beard a tear
Ran sparkling; and he bowed his head to me—
The grand, gray, haughty head—and cried aloud,
Thrice cried aloud "HAIL MASTER!"—Why, 'tis strange—
How came I here—these colors on my fingers—
This brush? Stop—let me think—I am not quite

Awake. Ah, I remember. Swooned, you say?
How long have I been lying thus? An hour
Dead on your breast? Wheel back the bed—put by
These playthings! I can do no more for man!
And God, who did so much for me—'tis time
Something were done for Him. A coach? Perhaps
The black mules of the Cardinal? No? Well,
Good Friday is the prayer-day of the year—
That keeps him. Who?—What! Leo's self has sent
To ask of Raphael? Kindly done; and yet
The iron Pontiff, whom I painted thrice,
Had *come*. No matter, these are gracious words,—
"*Rome were not Rome without me.*" My best thanks
Back to his Holiness; and dare I add
A message, 'twere that Rome can never be

Without me. I shall live as long as Rome!
Bramante's temple there, bequeathed to me
To hide her cross-crowned bosom in the clouds—
San Pietro—travertine and marble massed
To more than mountain majesty—shall scarce
Outlast that bit of canvas. Let the light in.
There's the Ritonda waiting patiently
My coming. Angelo has built his chape
In Santa Croce, that his eyes may ope
On Ser Filippo's Duomo. I would see—
What think you?—neither dome nor Giotto's
shaft,
Nor yon stern Pantheon's solemn, sullen grace,
But Her, whose colors I have worn, since first
I dreamed of beauty in the chestnut shades
Of Umbria—Her, for whom my best of life
Has been one labor—Her, the Nazareth Maid,
Who gave to Heaven a Queen, to man a God,
To God a Mother. I have hope of it!—
And I would see her—not as when she props

The babe slow tottering to the Cross amid
The flowering field,—nor yet when, Sybil-eyed,
Backward she sweeps her Son from Tobit's
Fish,—
Nor e'en as when above the footstool angels,
She stands with trembling mouth, dilated eyes,
Abashed before the uncurtained Father's
throne,—
But see her wearing the rapt smile of love
Half human, half divine, as fast she strains
Her infant in the Chair.——

——There is a step
Upon the staircase. Has she come again?
She *must* not enter. Take her these big
pearls
Meant for the poor dead bride I strove to love.
Tell her to wear them, when the full moon
fires
The Flavian arches, and she wanders forth

To the green spot—she will remember it—
A little farther on. No more of this.
Say but the word, too long delayed,—Farewell.
We said it oft before, meaning it too—
But life and love were with us—so we met.
This time—we part in earnest. Not a word?—
She bent her head and vanished, leaving me
These flowers? No tears—*not one?* So like her! Set
The buds in water—leave me one—this one—
We'll fade together. Giulio, in my will
Her name stands next to yours: I would not have
Those dark eyes look on want, that looked on me
So long, so truly. Do not shake your head:
She'll find her way to Heaven, if I am there
Before her. Jealous?—Brother, I will die
Upon your bosom—*you* shall close these eyes,
Eyes that have lived above this city's towers,

Up where the eagle's wing hath never swept:
Eyes that have scanned the far side of the sun,
And upward still, high over Hesperus,
Have climbed the mount where trembling angels bow,
And stolen the shining forms of beauty niched
Fast by the Eternal throne. I pray you hold
Those roses something nearer.

Shall we send
Francesco for the Cardinal? You see
The shadow of the pines slopes eastward now—
Santa Maria's empty:—he may come
Too late—there's a strange hush about my heart
Already. Still, a word before the last,
Long silence comes. I do not think to leave
An enemy behind me: Angelo
Has sometimes wronged me, but I cannot hate—
I have that weakness—so I pitied him.

Giulio, the artist is not he who dreams,
But he who does;—and when I saw this man,
Hewing his way into the marble's heart
For the sweet secret that he dreamed was there,
Till the fast fettered beauty perished, killed
By the false chisel and imperious hand,
That held no Heaven-commissioned key to ope
The prison gates—I pitied him, I say;
And once I wept, as by me once he stalked
Beneath the stars, in either eye a tear,
Groaning beneath his load of voiceless beauty.
I knew his mighty sorrow—I had felt it,—
And who that soars has not? No wing that fans
The sun, but sometimes burns! O grandest Greek,
Not thine alone to ravish fire from Heaven,
Nor thine alone the rock: in every age,
The vulture's beak is in the artist's soul!

In this, we are brothers. Give him my last
greeting.
When next you meet.——

The Cardinal, at last.
Before he enters, Giulio, lay this flower
Among the others.—You may leave us now.

A CARD FROM THE VIOLETS.

Are you so sick, dear?—
  Oh! we assure you,
  We've come to cure you—
Let us in—quick there!

Did not expect us?—
  Fresh from the meadows,
  Sweeter than red rose,
Can you reject us?

Will you not hear us—
  Blue as our eyes are,
  True as our sighs are,
Nobody's near us.

Saint, can you censure
  Such sweet physicians—
  Fairy prescriptions
Will you not venture?

Not even try us?—
  Morn's merry tear-drops
  On us—the deer stops
Ere he bounds by us.

Bring us before you;
  If you are sleeping
  We shall be peeping
Sentinels o'er you.

Or when we've found you,
  If you are waking,
  We shall be shaking
Perfumes around you.

Poor little flowers—
  Angels might cherish
  Beauties that perish
Sinless as ours.

And when we're faded—
  Out of the door there
  Throw us—there's more where
Our eyes were shaded!

THE LAST SNOW-WREATH.

That gray forest—you remember,
It was spring's first budding day,
The last snow-wreath of December
On the shaded hillside lay;
And your brow, though all was brightness,
And the world and we at play,
Had a winter in its whiteness
That I could not smile away.

That green forest—from the shadows
Where that silver fleece had slept,
Vigil o'er the dreaming meadows,
Bands of blue-eyed violets kept;

And your brow—at once aglow, love,
Fast the melting winter wept,
And the last of all its snow, love,
Into tearful summer swept.

Mine at last, you bowed before me!—
I could hear the won heart beat,
Though the dim sun trembled o'er me,
Though the earth swam at my feet.
Are the stars already shining?
Ah! the angel hours are fleet,
When fond arms are first entwining
And true lips first thrilling meet.

On we sped—the green boughs weaving
Fairy dance on mountain crest;
On we fled—the arched wave heaving
In its exquisite unrest;
Yet no grace of stream or tree, love,
In their sunset glory dressed,

Matched your white arms waving free, love,
Or the tremor of your breast.

Let us home!—and cease to sigh, love,
For the snow-wreath that has gone;
It has gone to gild the rye, love,
And to plume the tasselled corn;
In the bending wheat to harden,
Or to scent the enamelled thorn;
It has gone to paint the garden,
And to glisten in the morn.

Peace to maiden plaint, then, dearest,
That love's light hath melted pride;
Gleameth not the lily fairest,
In the red-rose shadow dyed?
Not more pure the snow, fresh falling,
Then those violets, azure-eyed;
But the whip-poor-will is calling—
Let us home, my morning's bride.

MARCELA.

Was it wrong, dear Lady Abbess,
That I spent the night in prayer,
That the Rosary you gave me
Numbered every bead a tear?
I but wept until the Watchman
Pausing in the street below,
Slowly chimed the midnight *ave*.
Then I gave to God my woe.

Thrice I sued the Saints for slumber,
Still I could not keep away
From the narrow window facing
The lit Chapel where he lay—

Where the funeral torches flickered
Through the ever-opening door,
As around their silent Poet,
Pressed the throng of rich and poor.

Yes, I meant to sleep, dear Mother,
But morning came so soon,
As I watched that lighted Chapel
Shining back upon the moon:
Once, methought, I lay beside him,
'Neath the sable and the gold,
Bending o'er my minstrel Father
As I used in days of old:

And a light—the same that trembled
O'er his lips and o'er his brow,
When he sang our San Isidro
With the Angels at the plow—

And a smile—the same that shone there,
When he bade the Mother Mild
Hush the wings that shook the palm-trees
Rustling o'er her sleeping child. . . . !

Oh, 'tis hard that all may follow
The mute Minstrel to his rest.
Save the nearest and the dearest,
Save the daughter he loved best!
I alone, his own Marcela,
Cannot touch dead Lope's bier,
Cannot kiss the lips whose music
None but Angels now may hear!

Still I feel, dear Lady Abbess,
You will grant me what you may;
Since your smile first hailed me Novice,
It is fourteen years to-day:

Have I shrunk from fast or vigil,
Have I failed at matin bell,
Have I clung to earthen image
Since I bade the world farewell?

Nine long days I've heard the tolling
Of the bells he loved to hear,
Nine long days I've heard the wailing
Of Madrid around his bier;
And, to-day, he will be buried,
For I catch the deepening hum
Of the people, and the stepping
Of the soldiers as they come.

Never once I begged you lead me
To the consecrated place,
Where, between the triple tapers,
I might gaze into his face—

Grant me, then, sweet Lady Abbess
Only this—but this, alas!
'Neath Marcela's cloister window
Let her father's funeral pass.

Not one look, not one, I promise,
For the Princes in their might,
For the war-horse proudly curving
To the spur of sworded Knight:
Though all Spain in tears surround him,
I shall know her Minstrel dead,
And my eyes—they will not wander
Far from Lope's silver head.

Look, the Chapel doors are parting,
See the lifted torches shine,
And the horsemen and the footmen
All the swarming pathways line.

Can it be . . . these poor tears blind me . . .?
Ah, you knew what I would pray,
And have granted ere I asked it—
Yes, they come—they come this way!

SHE WILL RETURN.

Laugh thy bold laugh again:
  Men must not mourn,
Not though they love in vain—
  She will return.

Moping and mute—for shame!—
  Women all spurn
Lovers so true and tame—
  She will return.

Thou with that stalwart form,
  Bent like the fern?
Oak should defy the storm—
  She will return.

Snap the bright silver thrall:
Hast thou to learn
No woman's worth it all?—
She will return.

Why, were it Helen dead,
Sealed in an urn,
Should half these tears be shed?—
She will return.

Pshaw, put this folly by:
Canst not discern
Scorn in thy neighbor's eye?—
She will return.

Maidens are merriest while
Lovers most yearn:
Not even force a smile!—
She will return.

Fie, what a fool art thou:
When the leaves burn
Round the ripe autumn's brow,
She will return.

"UNDER THE TREE, LOVE."

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
Were we not merry,
Sunset and we?
Dark in the valley
Lay the dim town,
We had just stolen
Forth from its frown.

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
Swearing sweet friendships,
April and we:

South winds to fan us,
Song-birds to greet,
Blossoms above us,
Buds at our feet.

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
On our green carpet,
Nature and we;
Bright o'er the river
Floats a far sail—
Why turns thy lover
Asudden so pale? . . .

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
Why is he gazing
T'ward the green sea?

Chirps the cicala
'Mid the mute cells—
Is it old Giotto
Ringing his bells?

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
Why am I trembling,
Answer for me?
Doth the sea beckon? . . .
Love at the oar,
Fate at the rudder,
Fatal the shore!

Under the tree, love,
Under the tree,
Grandly above us
Spreads a blue sea:

Two silver beacons
  Sphered in the skies,
Eve in her cradle,
  Opening her eyes.

Under the tree, love,
  Under the tree,
All the stars watching
  You, love, and me:
Stars that would follow us
  Over the wave,
Eyes that would haunt us
  Down to the grave.

Under the tree, love,
  Under the tree,
"Choose! we must choose now—
  Choose either sea!"

"Turn from the white sail
Fluttering by,
Watch those twin beacons
Sphered in the sky!"

SAN SISTO.

Three hundred years the world has looked at it
Unwearied,—it at Heaven; and here it hangs
In Dresden, making it a Holy City.
It is an old acquaintance: you have met
Copies by thousands,—Morghens here and there,—
But all the sunlight withered. Prints, at best
Are but the master's shadow—as you see.
I call that face the holiest revelation
God ever made to genius. How or why,
When, or for whom 'twas painted, wherefore ask?
Enough to know 'tis Raphael, and to feel
His Fornarina was not with him, when

Spurning the slow cartoon he flashed that face,
That Virgin Mother's half transfigured face,
On canvas. Yes, they say, 'twas meant to head
Some virginal procession:—to that banner
Heaven's inmost gates might open, one would think.
But let the picture tell its story—take
Your stand in this far corner. Falls the light
As you would have it? That Saint Barbara,—
Observe her inclination and the finger
Of Sixtus:—both are pointing—*where?*—Now look
Below,—those grand boy-angels;—watch their eyes
Fastened—*on whom?*—What, not yet catch my meaning? . . .
Step closer,—half a step—no nearer. Mark
The Babe's fixed glance of calm equality.
Observe that wondering, rapt, dilated gaze,

The Mother's superhuman joy and fear,
That hushed—that startled adoration! Watch
Those circled cherubs swarming into light,
Wreathing their splendid arch, their golden ring,
Around the unveiled vision. Look above
At the *drawn curtain!*—Ah, *we* do not see
God's self, but *they* do:—they are face to face
With the Eternal Father!——

Sir, 'tis strange:
That wondrous Virgin face, which Raphael plucked
From his vast soul four centuries ago,
Is breathing now,—not in his Italy—
But on the shores where then first flashed the sail
Of Genoa's ocean Pilot. Years ago,
We met mid-heav'n like drops of summer rain

Then, falling, parted!—But—observe the picture:
Am I not right?—Just—just before them burns,
Viewless to us, the unveiled Omnipotent.
Yet, somehow, critics fail to see, or say this.

THE ALBATROSS.

"Think of me often"—With a smile
You said it, fair Lady, for you knew
That everywhere and everywhile
I think of you.

Have you forgotten, though years ago,
A summer's evening walk of ours,
When earth was vocal and aglow,
With birds and flowers?

The sun was printing his parting kiss
On the cross of the Convent spire,
The brook bounded by with a laugh of bliss
And eyes of fire.

The lark slid lazily to his nest,
His matin music still,
The mourner minstrel wooed in the West—
The whip-poor-will.

A star stole timidly to its place,
And stood fast in the deepening blue,
And you bent your head, while over your face
An arch smile flew:

For my love was born with that tell-tale star
In the holy hush of even,
Timidly stealing to earth from afar—
The far, high Heaven.

And you—how you lingered laughingly by
That peaceful convent gate,
Then, turning from me your beautiful eye,
Left me desolate!

Since then, since there, through joy or care,
Through loving, loathing, hate,
Have I thought of you, blooming, young, and fair,
At that Convent gate.

The storm of manhood has come and gone,
I have fronted many a fate,
But I never forgot the star that shone
O'er that Convent gate.

Ah, you knew it well, for the proud lip curled
At a love, mute, hopeless, true;
You knew that I wearily walked the world,
Thinking of you:

Thinking of you these long, lost years
Of penury, peril, pain:
Thinking of you through sunshine and tears—
Thinking in vain!

White, lonely, changeless, beautiful,
Amid life's tempest-toss,
Your image tranquilly sleeps on my soul—
Its Albatross.

BEATRICE.

WELL, as thou wilt,—but thou art lovelier now
Than ever yet,—eyes softer shining,—brow
Fuller of thoughtful light; and, whether less
Thy loving then, a nobler tenderness
Now tunes thy voice and fires thy velvet cheek.
I shall obey:—but I may sometimes seek
Leave to return, for in my journeying
I shall grow weary, and no other spring
Can quench my thirst;—besides, I shall have fears
For thee, for thou hast lost the gift of tears,

And thy fixed eyes look steadfastly at woe,
Too long beheld, and fill, but ne'er o'erflow.
When the dull days creep on,—no more, no more,
The swift step on thy staircase, at thy door,
The quick, sure tap,—the strong hand lightly laid
In thine a moment,—may it not be said
"There sits she sighing in her solitude
For her lost Minstrel,—she has dearly rued
Her late resolve, too late deferred to save:—
Poor child, there will be roses on her grave
Ere springtime!" Thus 'twould please them best.

—But, sweet,
When in the twilight, by my vacant seat,
Thou'rt lying, and the crimson cushion hides
In thy brown ringlets,—when the river glides,
Dimmed with *thy* shadow only,—when the stone
Carved with thy symbol name, by thee alone,

Is visited,—it seemeth, lady, then
Thou may'st have need of me—that once again,—
Nay, hist!—I doubt thee not. I know of old
Thy grand defiant brow,—thy bearing bold
In sorrow's night,—the step elastic,—gaze
Starward unmovingly,—the song of praise
Hymned to the angels:—*they* will care for thee,—
What need of mortal love! Yet could it be
That some soft vesper-time, when incense wreathes
Thy chapel, and the rustic anthem breathes,
Or some fair summer's night, when laid at rest,
Thou and thy *cross of gold*, an instant guest,
I might steal up and whisper, Peace!—

Not yet—
Bear with me, love, a moment longer,—let
This white hand slumber on in mine, and place
Thy head against my shoulder, with thy face

Upturned!—There,—stir not,—sleep! 'Tis like
a trance,
That night of our first meeting, when the
dance
Flashed by unheeded; like a dream, the morn
When,—brighter sunrise!—silently was born
Thy bountiful, broad love; and the far seas,
Where in the shadow of the Pyrenees,
My soul first climbed the heights of thine, and
gave
Thee back an equal guerdon; and the wave
Repassed, the fleet five years of Paradise,—
The Eden that was ours,—until, with eyes
Opened to sudden knowledge, at our love's
Stern strength, we trembled. Through the
evening groves
There swept no angry challenge, but the low
Grand voice upbraided tenderly: for though
Our lips oft drank the dews, we never ate
The fruit of that fair tree; and at the gate,

The Angel, smiling, sank his fiery brand
In pity as we passed,—not hand in hand,
But parting in the wilderness

Sleep on,
My lost one,—each will walk the world alone,
Since Heaven so wills it: with thy daily cares
Thou wilt deal calmly, and thy guardian prayers
Shall follow me, that I may sometimes find
Grandeur in nature, fragrance in the wind,
Beauty in woman, gentleness in man;
For O, it seems as if the stream that ran
Beside my soul were dry, and all things have
A withered look: the sunbeam in the wave
No longer dances,—the cold clouds refuse
Their sunset glow,—the unsought roses lose
Their perfumed blushes,—dimly wandereth
The moon amid the tree-tops, pale as death,

Weary and chill,—and I can scarce rejoice
In music's benediction, and the voice
Of friendship sounds like solemn mockery.
Why, e'en the tingling cheek and soaring eye
Of genius, visioned with some splendid dream,
Seem scenic tricks:—unwooed, unwelcome gleam
The plumèd thoughts,—nor have I heart to win
The broidered butterflies we catch and pin
To poet desks, in boyhood. Yet fear not
The future: I shall bravely front my lot,
With the one rapture manhood ne'er foregoes,
The stately joy of mastering its woes.
No eye shall see me falter,—I shall ask
No respite on the wheel,—whate'er the task
The circling days appoint, I humbly trust
For strength to do it:—there shall be no rust
On sword or shield,—howe'er the heart may
ache
Beneath the goad; yet, sweet, for thy dear
sake

I'll wear the yoke, until the furrow opes
A little deeper,—then we'll end it, hopes
And fears.

Yet sometimes, when the old desire
Of rhyming comes, and the familiar choir
Of cherub voices, with returning song,
Make my sad chamber musical; when throng
The cloistered faces, with uplifted veil,
Each with remembered smile,—serene and pale,
As those stone priestesses that walk in Rome
And Florence, shall thy living image come
And stand before me, motioning the rest
Away. And I believe—O! stir not, lest
Waking bring utter anguish—that when years
The morning years of life, have passed, and tears
And time and sorrow shall have so o'erthrown
The temple of thy beauty, that unknown

We two may walk the ways where now, alas!
The finger follows, and false whispers pass
'Twixt smiling friends,—when perished youth's last charm,
E'en they who blamed us most, exclaim, What harm
In their *now* meeting?—let me, love, believe
This parting not for ever—that some eve
Like this, I may approach thee, kneeling smooth
Thy loose brown hair, warm thy cold fingers, soothe
The aching bosom, lay my hand upon
Thy brow, and touch these dear lips—thus.—Sleep on!

LA VELATA.

Pitti Palace—No. 245.

You tread upon graves, my Lady,
  And walk where you will, my sweet,
You will still leave a ruined life, or two,
  Like mine lying under your feet.
Yet your glance is as clear and cloudless,
  You carry as happy a head
As the vestal whose torch lit the altar stone
  While the hearts of a hecatomb bled.

Hail, Queen of the Dead, my Lady,
  Of dead hearts that beat sullenly on,
Waking once a year in a living tomb
  To ache for the smile that is gone.

Sweep on with your laugh of music,—
But, wander wherever you may,
Some new grave will open beneath your feet,
And the Black Cross still mark your way.

THE BIRD'S SONG.

To sing was my only duty,
So I sang for you all the day;
But there fell a silence with the night,
And my voice it has passed away:
A silence fell with the falling night,
And with it an icy pain,
So I folded my head beneath my wing,
Never to sing again.

And when morning broke without my song
You flew to your minstrel dead,
And smoothed the wings that were folded fast
While a tear or two you shed;

I knew you would miss me, mistress mine,
When my little house would be still;
Miss the fitful gleam of my yellow breast
Through the wires,—and the greeting bill!

Put your mouth to mine,—did I sit and sing
On my perch all the seasons through,
In that painted cage,—with a useless wing
And a ceaseless song for you?—
But, there were times when I saw my mates
Sweep by with the glittering spring,
Trilling their loves in the blossoming groves,
And then—it was sorrow to sing.

But now that I never shall sing again,
Lay me beneath a tree,
Where the minstrels that never knew the cage
May gather and sing for me:

I cannot leave you my voice, Lady,
But my plumage tenderly touch,—
These feathers of gold are little, Lady,—
But who else can leave you as much?

INKERMANN.

I.

In marble Sebastòpol
The bells to chapel call:
Our outposts hear the chanting
Of monks within the wall.
Why meet they there, with psalm and prayer?—
'Tis some high festival.
By the old Achaian ruin
Why groan those heavy wheels?
Some forage freighted convoy
Toward the leaguered city steals.
Sleep!—will the serfs twice routed
Dare the freeman's steel again,
Will the slaves we stormed from Alma
Beard the lion in his den?

II.

'Tis a drizzling Sabbath day-break,
Cheerless rings the reveillé,
Through the shroudlike mists around us
Not a stone's throw can we see:
Feebly up the clouded welkin
Toils the morning bleak and gray,
Dim as twilight in October,
Dawns that dark and dismal day.
The camp once more is sounding,
Slowly putting on its strength,
As a boa, starved from torpor,
Half uncoils its lazy length.
Some are drying their damp muskets,
Others gloss the rusted steel,
Some are crouching o'er the watch-fires
At the hurried matin meal:
Some are bending o'er their Bibles,
Others bid the beads of Rome,

Many, still unwaken'd, hearken
To the Sabbath bells of home.
The mountain and the valley
With the hoary haze are white,
Sea and river, friend and foeman,
Town and trench are hid from sight:
And the camp itself so softly
With the snowy mist is blent,
Scarce the waving of the canvas
Shows the outline of the tent.

III.

Hark, the rifle's hawklike whistle!
But we stir not for the din,
Till with sullen step the pickets
From the hills are driven in,—
Till the river seemed to thunder
Through its rocky pass below,
And a voice ran through the army,
"Up to arms!—it is the foe!"

Up with the Red Cross banner,
Out with the victor steel,
"Up to Battle," the drums rattle,
"Form and front," the bugles peal.—
From the tents and from the trenches,
From the ramparts, from the mine,
We are groping for the bayonet,
We are straggling into line;
Half attired and half accoutred,
Spur the officers headlong,
And the men from slumber starting,
Round their colors fiercely throng.
Then the lit artillery's earthquake
Shook the hills beyond the gorge—
Mute were then a thousand hammers
Smiting hard the sounding forge.
Full upon us comes the ruin,—
They have ranged the very spot,—
Purple glares the sod already,
As the storm falls fast and hot,

At our feet the earth foams spraylike
'Neath the tempest of their shot.

IV.

Crouched like caged and fretted lion,
For the unseen foe we glare,—
Not a bayonet, not a sabre
Through the rolling mists appear.
Yet full sure the slaves are on us,
For along the river's bed
Tolls the low and measured thunder
Of a mighty army's tread.
The hearts beneath our bosoms
Swell high as they would burst,
We know not what is coming,
But we nerve us for the worst:
Fast our shoulders grow together,
Firm beneath that iron hail,
The thin red line is forming,
That was never known to quail.

Up from the slopes beneath us
  Nearer thrills the muffled hum,
They are stepping to the onset,
  Without trumpet, without drum,
And we clutch our pieces tighter,—
    Let them come!

V.

The fog before us deepens:—
  Like a dark spot in a storm,
Along the mist-wreathed ridges,
  Their crowded columns form:
The helmets and the gray-coats
  Scarce pistol-shot ahead,—
They are on us—let us at them—
  Unavengèd we have bled!
Steady! The eager rifle
  Is warming at our cheeks;
Yon column's head is melting
  As the levelled minié speaks.

Forward, forward, form and forward!
Fast as floods through river sluice,
The yeomanry of England
On the Muscovite are loose.
What, bide they there to meet us,
That phalanx of gray rock?
In vain! No human bulwark
Can breast the coming shock.
At them—on them—o'er them—through them,
The Red Line thunders still;
A cheer, a charge, a struggle,
And we sweep them from the hill.
Not a man had we left living
Of the masses marshalled there,
But their siege-guns in the gorges
Stay our conquering career.
Then, as we breathe from slaughter,
And ere we close our ranks,
The foe, one column routed,
Hurls a fresh one on our flanks.

Unappalled and unexhausted,
We welcome the new war,
Though like locusts in midsummer
Swarm the legions of the Czar.
Fifty thousand men are on us,
Scarce a tithe of them are we,—
Well might they swear to drive us
Ere nightfall to the sea.
Yet, St. George for merry England!
A volley, and we close,
'Neath the martyr cross of bayonets,
Redder yet the Red Line grows,

VI.

These are not the men of Alma,
Who are now so well at work;
On the Danube, at Silistria,
They have schooled them 'gainst the Turk;
O'er the mountains of Circassia
Their black eagles they have borne,

And the children of their High Priest
Lead the stern fanatics on.
Point to point and breast to bosom,
Hand to hand we madly clinch,
And the ground we win upon them
Is disputed inch by inch.
The warrior blood of Britain
Never rained so fast a tide,
Man and captain fall together,
Peer and peasant, side by side.
We have routed thrice our number,
Still their front looms thrice as vast,
While our line is thinned and jaded
And our men are falling fast.
Upon them with the bayonet!—
Our powder waxes scant—
What more with foe so near him
Does British soldier want?

VII.

Once more—once more, borne backward
Their stubborn legions fly,
And we saw our brave commander,
With his staff, come riding by;
Calmly he dared the danger,
But a gloom was in his eye,
For the mounds of his dead soldiers
Lay around him thick and high.
God knows his thought!—It might be
Of other mounds, I ween,—
Of parapets, which, mounted,
Such havoc had not been.
But in brunt of battle ever
Was the Saxon bosom bare.
So we hailed him, as he passed us,
With a hearty English cheer;
And as the nobles round him
Were falling, did we pray,

That his hero life amid the strife,
Might be spared to us that day.
O dark the cloud that rested
On our chieftain's anxious brow:
He has staked his all on the Spartan wall—
It must not fail him now!

VIII.

Then, as waveless in the tempest
Broods the white wing of a gull,
O'er the hurricane of battle
Swept a momentary lull.
Countless lay the dead and dying,
Few and faint the living stood,
Every blade of grass beneath us
Had its drop of hero blood.
To our knees the stiffening bodies
Of our fallen comrades rose
But higher, deeper, thicker,
Lay the holocaust of foes.

And so fast the gore of Russia
From the British bayonet runs,
Trickling down our dinted rifles,
That our hands slip on our guns.
Far along the scarlet ridges
Looming dim through mist and smoke,
In scattered groups, divided
By coppice and dwarfed oak,
Rests the remnant of our army,
Rests each motley regiment,
Coldstream, Fusileer, and Ranger,
Line, and Guard together blent,—
To the charge still sternly leaning,
Undismayed, undaunted still,
Grimly frowning o'er the valley,
Proven masters of the hill.
A windgust from the mountain
Swept the driving rack away,
And we saw our battling brothers
For the first time that dark day.

But as up the white shroud drifted,
St. George, what sight beneath!—
'Twas as when the veil is lifted
From the stony face of death.
Right before us, right beneath us,
Right around us, everywhere,
The fresh hordes of the Despot
On flank and centre bear:
Around us and about us
The armèd torrent rolls,
As around a foundering galley
Glance the fins of bristling shoals.
O never, England, never,
Though aye outnumbered sore,
Has thy world-encountering banner
Faced such fearful odds before!

IX.

On they come, like crested breakers
That would whelm us in their wrath,

Or the wingèd flame of prairies
  Whirling stubble from its path.
But with cheer as stout as ever
  To the charge again we reel,
Again we mow before us
  Those harvests of stiff steel.
Too few, alas! the living
  These hydra hosts to stem,
But our comrades lie around us,
  We can sleep at last with them.
Rally, Britons, round your colors,
  And if no succor near,
Then for God, our Queen, our country
  Let us proudly perish here!
Each hand and foot grows firmer
  As they yell their demon cry,
Each soldier's glance grows brighter
  As his last stern task draws nigh;
By the dead of Balaklava
  We will show them how to die! . . .

X.

Heard ye not that tramp behind us? . . .
If a foeman come that way,
We may make one charge to venge us,
And then look our last of day.
As the tiger from the jungle,
On the bounding column comes;
We can hear their footfall ringing,
To the stern roll of their drums;
We can hear their billowy surging,
As up the hill they pant,—
O God! how sweetly sounded
The well-known "*En avant!*"
With their golden eagles soaring,
Bloodless lips and falcon glance,
Radiant with the light of battle,
Came the chivalry of France.
Ah! full well, full well we knew them,
Our bearded, bold allies,

All Austerlitz seemed shining
Its sunlight from their eyes.
Round their bright array dividing,
We gave them passage large,
For we knew no line *then* living,
Could face that fiery charge.
One breathing space they halted—
One volley rent the sky,—
Then the *pas de charge* thrills heavenward
"*Vive l'Empereur!*" the cry.
Right for the heart of Russia
Cleave the swart Gallic braves,
The panthers of Alma,
The leopard-limbed Zouaves.
The cheer of rescued Britain
One moment thundered forth,
The next—we trample with then
The pale hordes of the North.
Ye that have seen the lightning
Through the crashing forest go,

Would stand aghast, to see how fast
We lay their legions low.
They shrink—they sway—they falter—
On, on!—no quarter then!
Nor human hand, nor Heaven's command
Could stay our maddened men.
A flood of sudden radiance
Bathes earth and sea and sky,
Above us bursts exulting
The sun of victory.
Holy moment of grim rapture,
The work of death is done,
The Muscovite is flying,
Lost Inkermann is won!

But that night 'twas bitter thinking,
As we dug the deep, dark grave,
That the mounds then o'er our comrades
Had been wall enough to save.

DONNA.

O LADY, in the morning of our meeting,
When love around us, flowerlike, awoke,
Bright o'er the face that gladdened at my greeting
The blush unbidden broke,
And your eyes trembled to your heart's quick beating
Whene'er I spoke.

Dear lady, then your form, so softly rounded,
Still with a lingering girl-light shone;
Your lips, whose laugh like fountain-music sounded,
No sorrow e'er had known,
For all the pulses of your being bounded
To love alone.

We parted then:—and now, in day's declining,
In the soul's twilight time we meet:
Sweet, let me feel again that arm's soft twining—
Quick, for the hours are fleet,
And I, an exile, while your youth was shining,
Crouch at your feet.

Ah, the twin roses on your cheeks have faded,
Your brow has lost its halo-light,
The dewy sunshine of your glance is shaded
With clouds of coming night;
E'en the brown splendor of your hair is braided
With mourning white.

Yet day is fairer 'neath the mountain sleeping
Then when in orient pomp it rose;

The brook bounds brighter for the winter's keeping
When spring unlocks the snows;
And you are lovelier now, when years of weeping
Thus smiling close.

O teach those eyes again their blessed beaming!
Nay, shrink not that I hold you fast—
Before us such a starry future gleaming,
Why grieve for mornings past?
Perchance our mingled tears, now mutely streaming,
May be the last.

BLIGHT AND BLOOM.

I.

Did we not bury them?
All those dead years of ours,
All those poor tears of ours,
All those pale pleading flowers—
Did we not bury them?

Yet, in the gloom there,
See how they stare at us.
Hurling despair at us,
Rising to glare at us
Out of the tomb there!

Curse every one of them!
Kiss, clasp and token,
Vows vainly spoken,
Hearts bruised and broken—
Have we not done with them?

Are we such slaves to them?—
Down where the river leaps,
Down where the willow weeps,
Down where the lily sleeps,
Dig deeper graves for them.

Must we still stir amid
Ghosts of our buried youth,
Gleams of life's morning truth,
Spices and myrrh, forsooth . . ?
Seal up the pyramid!

II.

Be still, my heart, beneath the rod,
And murmur not;
He too was Man—the Son of God—
And shared thy lot.

Shared all that we can suffer here,
The gain, the loss,
The bloody sweat, the scourge, the sneer,
The Crown, the Cross,

The final terror of the Tomb.—
His guiltless head
Self-dedicated to the doom
We merited.

Then sigh not for earth's Edens lost,
Time's vanished bliss;
The heart that suffers most, the most
Resembles his.

SHEMSELNIHAR.

First Afeef spake: "Thy Favorite is dead!
Touch not those lips, my Master, they were
false:
Weep not for one who had no smiles for thee."
But Haroun said,

His dim eyes fastened on the face where life
And death seemed striving which should paint
it fairest,
"Peace, she hath loved!"

Then Wazief spake: "There was a Persian dog
Who died this morning—she has gone to meet
him:

To share his grave, she leaves a throne with thee."

But Haroun said,

"How many hearts will cease their beat with mine,
As hers with his, because they loved their Caliph?
Say, O ye faithful!"

But Mesrour muttered, "To the boat with her!
Those dainty dancing girls are whispering now
Of her mad doating on the Persian dog!"

But Haroun said,

"Build her a tomb of porphyry and jet,
Where fountains murmur and where cypress waves:
Love is a light seen once a thousand years,
And she hath loved!"

LAZARUS.

I HAD lived, I had loved,
  And had lived and loved in vain;
I had said unto my soul,
  "You shall never love again:
I can brave the bitter night,
  Bear that all is dross and dust,
Dare all sorrows save the blight
  Of another broken trust."

But it came, ah, it came
  In a shape so sweet and pure,
Never hope that ever shone
  Seemed so gentle, seemed so sure:

For the winds without my will
Bore the blossom to my breast,
And, so being human still,
Where it fell, I let it rest.

Soon it bloomed above my heart,
And I said, "At last, at last
Here's the rose I vainly sought
In the gardens of the past."
So I laughed and cried aloud,
"Break, O earth around me, break,
Away with worm and shroud,
Lo, I'm living for her sake!"

Then with eyes at last unclosed,
And with hands at length unclasped,
Slowly stirring in my shroud
At my flower I feebly grasped;

But as if beneath a frost
Shrank the swift-recoiling head,
I had scared her with my ghost,
She had taken me for dead.

"Ah, my Queen! ah, my Queen!
See my lips are running red,
They can kiss back to your leaves
All the crimson that has fled.
Wake, oh wake, to watch and wave
O'er my slumbers as before,
I will back into my grave,
I will never leave it more."

So I creep back to my tomb
Which seems twice as deep and drear,
Though all fairer for that frost
Blooms my Queen without a peer.

Mine alone, till far her fame
With each wanton zephyr fled—
Ah, my grave is still the same,
But no rose is at its head.

THE IVORY CRUCIFIX.

I.

Within an attic old at Genoa,
Full many a year, I ween,
Had lain a block of ivory,
The largest ever seen.

Though wooing centuries had wiled
Its purity away,
Gaunt Time had made a slender meal,
So well it braved decay.

If we may trust Tradition's tongue,
Some mastodon before
The wave kissed Ararat's tall peak,
The splendid trophy wore.

Certes, no elephant e'er held
Aloft so rich a prize,
Not India's proudest jungle boasts
A tusk of half the size.

A Monk obtained and to his cell
The relic rare conveyed,
And bending o'er the uncouth block
This Monk, communing, said:

"Be mine the happy task by day
And through the midnight's gloom,
To toil and still toil on until
This shapeless mass assume

"The form of HIM who on the Cross
For us poured forth his blood:
Thus man shall ever venerate
This relic of the flood.

"Though now a witness to the wrath
Of the dread God above,
Changed by my chisel, it shall be
The emblem of His love."

II.

That night when on his pallet stretched,
As slumber o'er him stole
A glorious vision brightly broke
Upon his ravished soul.

He sees his dear Redeemer stand
On Calvary's sacred height,
The Crucifixion is renewed
Before his awe-struck sight.

He sees his Saviour's pallid cheek
With pitying tears impearled,
He hears His dying accents bless
A persecuting world:

Sees the last look of love supreme
Conquering each aching sense,
Superior to agony
Its deep benevolence.

III.

The matin bell has pealed—the Monk
Starts from his brief repose;
But still before his waking eye
The vivid dream arose.

His morning orisons are paid,
His hand the chisel wields,
Slowly before the eager steel
The stubborn ivory yields.

The ancient block is crusted o'er
With a coating hard and gray,
But soon the busy chisel doffs
This mantle of decay.

And now, from every blemish freed,
Upon his kindling eye,
In all its pristine beauty, dawns
The milk-white ivory.

IV.

The sun arose, the sun went down,
Arose and set again,
But still the Monk his chisel plies—
Oh, must he toil in vain?

Not his the highly cultured touch
That bade the marble glow,
And with a hundred statues linked
The name of Angelo.

Perchance some tiny image he
Had fashioned oft before,
But art had ne'er to him unveiled
Her closely hoarded lore.

A faithful hand, an eye possessed
Of genius' inborn beam,
Or inspiration's loftier light,
Must body forth his dream.

v.

The moon has filled her fickle orb,
The moon is on the wane,
A crescent now she sails the sky,
And now is full again.

But bending o'er that Ivory block
The Monk is kneeling there,
Full half his time to toil is given,
And half is spent in prayer.

Four years elapsed before the Monk
Threw his worn chisel by;
Complete at last before him lies
The living ivory.

His dream at last is bodied forth,
And to the world is given
A sight that well may wean the soul
From earth awhile to heaven.

The dying look of love supreme
Conquering each aching sense,
Unquenched by burning pain, reveals
Its vast benevolence.

Behold that violated cheek
With pitying tears impearled,
The parting lips that seem to bless
A persecuting world.

Has not the light of page inspired
A true reflection here,
Does not the sacrifice of love
In ivory reappear?

Is not the Evangel's sacred page
  Translated here as well
As any human alphabet
  Its glorious truths can tell?

Ye who would fain my gaze prevent,
  Conceal the Gospel too:
The mystery recorded there
  Is here but told anew.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

I'LL heal the sting,—
Man's sting,—the human sting at Nature's spring!
Behold the Master's Wonder-book unrolled,
Explore with gladdened eye, and heart consoled,—
"Whilst I its pages one by one unfold!"
Thus spake the King.

And lo, a sheet
Of trembling azure clothes the mountain's feet,
Dark boats go glancing through it with lit oars
Of dripping silver,—all the villaed shores
Repeat themselves in crystal,—proudly soars
The radiant sleet

Of purple peaks
Beneath whose crests the mellowed thunder speaks.
Half-way to heaven the birdlike chapel broods,
Soft winds sweep sighing through the slanting woods
Between whose shadows flash the cloud-born floods
In jewelled streaks.—

New visions throng—
The canvas shifts and now we float along,
Rounding a dead volcano in the light
Of rising stars, while every eye is bright—
Hers brightest—as we hail the rising night
With jest and song.

Sweet vision, say,
Must thou too like thy sister pass away?

Alas, remorseless hills between us stride,
As eunuchs gather round a Sultan's bride,
Shielding her beauty from the evil-eyed!
Stay, Phantom, stay!—

All changed again!
Above the clouds we wander, the dim plain
Shrunk to a garden: 'gainst the bridal sun
Fond snow-peaks lean their livid cheeks and run
To earth in tears: now heaven itself is won
And won in vain!—

Another change.
Between the twin crests of a parted range
The sky has fallen and sleeps in silvered blue;
And here a Poet's soul comes with the dew
To Chillon murmuring all the midnight through
With voices strange.

Away!—our prow
Cuts the crisp wave—new scenes, new lands—and now
Gleams the Snow Monarch on his Gothic throne,
Orphaned of heaven and earth, defiant, lone,
Save when the sun's last scarlet kiss is thrown
Upon his brow.

Green seas of ice
Beneath our guided feet—gray glaciers rise
Weeping themselves away, yet ever fed
By the fresh tears their sire is doomed to shed:
At last his awful front we touch and tread
Upon the skies.

"Fool, dost thou cling
Fast to thy folly? Must the Master fling

His wonders round thy pathway, but to whet
The edge of yearning—see thy heart still set
Upon the human—deeper in the net?"—
Thus spake the King.

"What if I bring
My unveiled glory to assuage thy sting?
Will it avail when thou dost clearly prize
Better than earth or heaven, than seas or skies,
The human love that burns in human eyes?"—
Thus spake the King.

And then I said,
Are not those eyes thy work—was not that head
Cast in thy mould—is not thy breath divine
Upon these lips—have not the Bread and Wine
Retrieved the Fall and made her image Thine?
Hast Thou not shed

A holier grace
Upon her form,—Thine image in her face,
Is it not worthier worship than the snows
Kissed by the sunset into domes of rose,
Or blue lake heaving in its rapt repose?
Let me embrace

My lot, and cling
Unto the human, I accept its sting:
I've measured it with Nature and with Art,
And find it next Thee.—Frown not ere we part!
'I never frown upon a living heart!"
Thus spake the King.

SAID THE ROSE.

I am weary of the Garden,
Said the Rose;
For the winter winds are sighing,
All my playmates round me dying,
And my leaves will soon be lying
'Neath the snows.

But I hear my Mistress coming,
Said the Rose;
She will take me to her chamber,
Where the honeysuckles clamber,
And I'll bloom there all December
Spite the snows.

Sweeter fell her lily finger
Than the Bee!
Ah, how feebly I resisted,
Smoothed my thorns, and e'en assisted
As all blushing I was twisted
Off my tree.

And she fixed me in her bosom
Like a star;
And I flashed there all the morning,
Jasmin, honeysuckle scorning,
Parasites for ever fawning
That they are.

And when evening came she set me
In a vase
All of rare and radiant metal,
And I felt her red lips settle
On my leaves till each proud petal
Touched her face.

And I shone about her slumbers
Like a light;
And, I said, instead of weeping,
In the garden vigil keeping,
Here I'll watch my Mistress sleeping
Every night.

But when morning with its sunbeams
Softly shone,
In the mirror where she braided
Her brown hair I saw how jaded,
Old and colorless and faded,
I had grown.

Not a drop of dew was on me,
Never one;
From my leaves no odors started,
All my perfume had departed,
I lay pale and broken-hearted
In the sun.

Still I said, her smile is better
Than the rain;
Though my fragrance may forsake me,
To her bosom she will take me,
And with crimson kisses make me
Young again.

So she took me . . gazed a second . .
Half a sigh . . .
Then, alas, can hearts so harden?
Without ever asking pardon,
Threw me back into the garden
There to die.

How the jealous garden gloried
In my fall!
How the honeysuckles chid me,
How the sneering jasmins bid me
Light the long, gray grass that hid me
Like a pall.

There I lay beneath her window
In a swoon,
Till the earthworm o'er me trailing
Woke me just at twilight's failing,
As the whip-poor-will was wailing
To the moon.

But I hear the storm-winds stirring
In their lair;
And I know they soon will lift me
In their giant arms and sift me
Into ashes as they drift me
Through the air.

So I pray them in their mercy
Just to take
From my heart of hearts or near it
The last living leaf, and bear it
To her feet, and bid her wear it
For my sake.

Songs.

SONGS.

BERTHA.

Bertha was close at his side,
Unloved though he sought for a Bride
Like Bertha;
So he kept on seeking and sighing
For one at his feet ever lying—
Ah Bertha!

There she lay tearful and mute,
Still as a marble lute,
Pale Bertha,
Watching the dreamer who sought her
Everywhere else than he ought to—
Dear Bertha!

FIDELIS.

A Maiden stood by a shining stream,
Sing tarry, tarry;
Her eye was rapt in a sweet, sweet dream,
Ay, marry, marry.
A suitor bold rode merrily by,
"Dream on," quoth he, "you will wake one day!
So my hounds shall hunt and my falcon fly.
Away! Away!"

A Ladye sat by a clouded stream,
Sing tarry, tarry;
Her heart still true to its first sweet dream,
Ay, marry, marry.

A Baron rode up with hawk and hound,
"Well, mistress mine, do you still say nay?
Come! my lance is sure and my steed is sound.
Away! Away!"

A Mourner knelt by a frozen stream,
Sing tarry, tarry;
Her hair all white with a snowy gleam,
Ay, marry, marry.
Once more to her side the Baron came
With hawk in hand, though his beard was gray;
But her maiden dream was still the same.
Away! Away!

LADY BIRD.

Lady Bird, Lady Bird
  Are you looking for a nest?
You may choose around my mansion
  Any spot that suits you best.
'Neath the trellis in the garden
  There's a shadow steeped in dew,
'Neath the linden by the grotto
  There's another out of view.

Lady Bird, Lady Bird,
  Will you ever keep away?
Just so near, but never nearer,
  Just to-day where yesterday:

While to me, with every moment
You have dearer, dearer grown,
Till at last, in all the valleys,
There's no music but your own.

Lady Bird, Lady Bird,
I have paid you song for song;
Not for all the sun shines over
Would I stoop to do you wrong.
Wing of gold and voice of silver,
Fly away for ever free,
Or teach others half the music
That you might have made for me.

SHE TOLD ME NOT TO LOVE HER.

She told me not to love her,
Yet lovelier still she grew ;
She pointed to the sky above her,
Then glided from my view
Ah ! could I follow too !
Alack, alack, ah welladay !

The years of love are flying,
The sun of love has set,
The summer leaves are dying,
But she is living yet.
Ah ! had we never met !
Alack, alack, ah welladay !

OH! THE YEAR HAS LOST ITS LIGHT.

Oh! the year has lost its light,
Summer sun's no longer bright,
Autumn drear and winter night,
  Spring returns in vain:
Morn and eve must come and fly,
Month and year must still go by,
But the love-light of her eye
  I'll never see again.

Oh! the pale moon overhead
Feebly seeks her fleecy bed,
And the stars are dim and dead,
  Voiceless is the sky:

All the future must be sold,
All the past remain untold,
Till the weary heart is cold—
Then for eternity!

THERE WAS A TIME.

There was a time she rose to greet me,
But what, alas! cared I?
For well I knew she flew to meet me,
Yet met me with a sigh.
I left her in her deep dejection,
And laughed with merry men;
What cared I for her true affection?
I did not love her then.

But now I wander weak and weary,
And what, alas! cares she?
I lost her love, and life grew dreary,
She scarce remembers me.

In vain, in vain I now implore her,
She spurns my tearful vow ;
Too late, too late, I now adore her,
She does not love me now.

BILL AND I.

The moon had just gone down, sir,
But the stars lit up the sky,
All was still in tent and town, sir,
Not a rebel could we spy:
It was our turn at picket,
So we marched into the thicket,
To the music of the cricket
Chirping nigh.

Oh! we kept a sharp lookout, sir,
But no danger could we spy
And no rebel being about, sir,
We sat down there by and by;

And we watched the brook a brawlin',
And counted stars a fallin',
Old memories overhaulin',
Bill and I.

And says he, "Won't it be glorious,
When we throw our muskets by,
And home again victorious
We hear our sweethearts cry,
'Welcome back!'"—
A step! Who goes there?
A shot—by heaven, the foe's there!
Bill sat there, all composure,
But not I.

By the red light of his gun, sir,
I marked the rebel spy:
In an instant it was done, sir,
I had fired and heard a cry.

I sprang across the stream, sir,
Oh! it seems just like a dream, sir,
The dizzy, dying gleam, sir,
Of that eye!

A youth, a very boy, sir,
I saw before me lie;
Some pretty school-girl's toy, sir,
Had ventured here to die.
We had hated one another,
But I heard him murmur '*Mother!*'
So I stooped and whispered '*Brother!*'—
No reply.

I crossed the stream once more, sir,
To see why Bill warn't by,
He was sittin' as before, sir,
But a film was o'er his eye;

I scarce knew what it meant, sir,
Till a wail broke from our tent, sir,
As into camp we went, sir,
Bill and I.

GABRIEL'S SONG.

FROM LORETTO.

I HEAR a sweet voice like the voice of a bird,
The softest and sweetest that ever was heard;
And it comes from the sky, from the blue, blessed
sky,
And it warbles, "Prepare, for the hour is nigh;"
And that voice is meant for me.
Far, far away,
Ere another day,
Shall I be!

I see two sweet wings that are not of the earth,
That shall bear me aloft to the land of my birth,

Two glittering wings of the purest white,
With each feather enshrined in a circle of light;
And those wings are meant for me.
Far, far away,
Ere another day,
Shall I be!

O the blossoming stars were my playmates of yore,
I shall skim the bright fields where I've sported before,
And I know a bright spot where the angels are,
That is high above the highest star;
And that spot is meant for me.
Far, far away,
Ere another day,
Shall I be!

A LULLABY.

Sleep, my child, and when I slumber,
Do not wake and weep,
Another mother comes from heaven
To watch thee when I sleep.
Though perchance thou mayst not see her,
She will still be nigh,
For she loves thee dearly, truly,
Better e'en than I.

Sleep, my child, thy heavenly mother
Hath no need of rest,
And ever with the night she cometh
To take thee to her breast.

Thus in joy and trust I slumber,
When the day is done,
For this mother's name is MARY,
Jesus is her Son.

Aladdin's Palace.

ALADDIN'S PALACE.

Aladdin's Palace, in a single night,
From base to summit rose ere morning light,
A pillared mass of porphyry and gold,
Gem sown on gem, and silk o'er silk unrolled;
So from the dust our young Republic springs,
Before the dazzled eyes of Eastern Kings.
Not like old Rome, slow spreading into state,
The century that freed beholds us great,
Sees our broad empire belt the western world,
From main to main our starry flag unfurled;
Sees in each port where Albion's Sea-Kings trail
Their purple plumes, Columbia's snowy sail.

Three deep the loaded deck our long wharves
line,
Three deep on buoyant hoops fast flounces
shine,
While thrice three-story brown stone proudly
tells
The tale of Mammon's modern miracles,
Marking full fifty places in a square
Where the born beggar dies the Millionaire.

But yet remember, glorious as we are,
Aladdin's Genie left one window bare;
And we, perchance, upon a close review,
May find our Palace lights unfinished too,—
Some slighted panel in the stately hall,
Some broidered hanging stinted on the wall,
Nay, e'en some jewels gone, that graced us
when
All men were free here—even gentlemen.

Of all the slaves in social bondage nursed,
Pater-familias stands supremely first:
Proud of his bondage, tickled with his chains,
The parent cringes while the stripling reigns.
Down with the Dotard! consecrate the Boy!
Since Age *must* suffer, let bright Youth enjoy.
Drink morning in!—old eyes were meant to wake:
Shake hands with ruin!—old hearts never break.
Welcome the worst—'tis but to close the door
And pack the outlaw to some College-Cure.
Alas! the tutor apes the parent fool,
The idle birch hangs rotting in the school.
Touch the young tyrant—like Olympian Jove
The avenging sire defends his injured love;
Clutches a cowhide, contemplates a suit,
Talks wildly of a martyr and a brute.
The worst disgrace his free-born son can know
Is not to merit, but receive a blow;

Honor, that prompts the pistol, damns the rod,—
Let beasts alone divide the scourge—with God.

Achilles saved, what next? Go home and rear
That up-town palace?—Why, you're never there.
Down by the docks your home is o'er the desk
From morn to night, curled like an arabesque,
Spinning the rich cocoon for child and wife,
Though, like the worm, the tribute cost your life.
Crawl home at midnight, to the basement go,
Hug the lit fender, toast the slippered toe;
One well-earned moment rest the throbbing head,
Though all the ceiling own the Lancers' tread.
Or dare the ball-room, you'll not spoil the feast,
'Tis the old story—Beauty and the Beast.

That Lion leaning o'er my Lady's chair
May start—but *she* will never know you're near.
Perchance some fopling compliments your taste,
His easy arm around Miss Mary's waist;
Admires your Elliott, wonders how he caught
Your mouth's full meaning—"Aw, I re-aul-ly thought
Those *sheep* were Ommegancks!"—Back to your den!
Your girl's far wiser cheek was tingling then.
Better be dead than ope those honest eyes
To half your marble mansion's mysteries.
Press your lone pillow, scheme to-morrow's pelf,
Your daughter, trust her, can protect herself:
Dread neither foreign Count nor native Fool,
Her heart was buried at a Boarding School.

Ah, not for nothing that smooth cheek's decay—
She *knows too much* to risk a runaway.
While beauty lasts, perchance the Young Moustache
May spoil the cooing of the Man of Cash;
But trust to time, your wrinkled belle will take
Some solid soul—some bank that cannot break,—
And reign the darling of a dull adorer,
Precisely as her mother did before her.

From private morals pass to public taste;
One jewel missing, can the next be paste?
A race of readers, we can surely claim
A dozen writers with a world-wide name,—
One drama that can hold the stage a season,
Two actors that confound not rant with reason,—

A minstrel equal to an average air,
An artist that has brains as well as hair?
Alas! the river where the millions drink
Flows from a Helicon of tainted ink,
Lower and lower the darkening stream descends,
Till, lost in filth, the sacred fountain ends.
Who reads *Andréa?*—here's a penny tale
That melts the milkmaid o'er her foaming pail;
Who weeps with *Luria* that can weekly sob
With all the victims of Sylvanus Cobb?
To "*In Memoriam*" why trembling turn
When fonder pathos flows from Fanny Fern?
Why wake the organ wail of *Hiawatha*
When piping Publishers assume the author?
And what, in turn, cares genius for the age?
Boz gaily rattles off his five-pound page;
Pendennis lazily dictates his story,
Sure of his pay, superbly dead to glory;
O'ershadowed Browning, sickening in the van,
Sheds Ariel's wings to roll with Caliban.

But peace to parchment—bid the canvas
gleam;
The pen rebellious, let the brush redeem.
Imperial Art, thy highest hope record!—
Behold a primrose dots the dewy sward.
Raphael dethroned, what triumphs now decree?
The twilight's bronze on blossomed cherry
tree.
Madonnas done with, Magdalens forbidden—
Lo, yonder rock in reverend mosses hidden.
Ah, sweet to think when time and reason blight
The budding of the last Pre-Raphaelite,
Those wondrous Dresden eyes shall still, as now,
Teach saints to worship, infidels to bow,
That Babe transfigured on the Virgin bosom
Outlive the daisy and the apple blossom.

Kings rule the East, the Merchant rules the
West,
Save round his hearth, supreme his high behest.

For him the captive lightning rides the main,
For him rent mountains hide the creaming train,
For him the placer spreads its golden sands,
The steamer pants, the spicy sail expands;
For him the quarry splits the moaning hill,
For him Laborde imports her newest trill.
Submissive science smooths his lordly path,
States court his nod and Senates dread his wrath;
Erect, undaunted, eager, active, brisk,
A front for ruin, nerve for any risk;
Shy of the snare, impatient of the chance,
The world a chess-board 'neath his eagle glance,
Armed with a Ledger—presto pass—he carves
And spends ten fortunes where a genius starves.
No robber knight that ever drove a-field
Bore braver heart beneath his dinted shield.
Atilt with fortune, if he win the prize,
The turnpike trembles, marble cleaves the skies,

Or, lost both stirrups, let him bite the plain,
His dying song still "Lobster and Champagne!"

O land of Lads, and Liberty, and Dollars!
O Nation first in schools and last in scholars!
Where few are ignorant, yet none excel,
Whose peasants read, whose statesmen scarcely spell;
Of what avail that science light the way,
When dwindling Senates totter to decay,—
Like some tall poplar withered at the head,
Our middle green, but all the summit dead.
We do not ask that mind and manners meet—
Utopian dream—in every Justice seat:
In troubled times 'tis not to be expected
That Law and Grammar be at once protected:
We can endure that barristers dispense
Tropes, neither rhetoric nor common sense,

While all the rabble bolt the fluent store
Of broken image, battered metaphor,—
But, great Diana, when we're only known,
In courts where Adams trod and Franklin shone,
By mute Ambassadors who grandly scorn to
Maim any language save the one they're born to;
Whe laughing Europe vainly would escape
Yankee sublime, refulgent in red tape,
Might not the torch that fired the Ephesian Dome
Be well employed—a little nearer home?
Of what avail the boast of steam and cable,
If doomed to grovel 'neath the curse of Babel?
Low droops our Eagle's eye to find us still
Cowed 'neath his wing—by Albion's gray-goose quill.
Why boast of Britain foiled on Bunker crest,
Her pen still rules the Rebel of the West.

Ye who have sipped the sweet Horatian page,
And burned with Juvenal in Roman rage;
Ye in whose bosom glows the true antique,
Whose solid armor's laced with genuine Greek,
Whose souls, high reaching to the fountain, find
The classic secrets that still sway mankind,—
What though the public hail with languid praise
Your prim orations or primeval lays;
What though Reviews, with accents soft as silk,
Skim all your cream and then reject your milk;
What though your polished pen scarce earn a garret,
While Double Entry points to peace and claret;
What though the heart, too long condemned to ache
For mocking chaplets, ask but leave to break;
What though a faction swear no Papal stone
Shall grace a pillar vowed to WASHINGTON—

Toil on!—before the crowning cope is set
That shaft may need some *Roman* Cement yet:
Toil on—toil on—there's no such word as fail,
Heaven sends the wind if we but set the sail:
Toil on,—the world's best laurels only bloom
Above the mound that marks the Martyr's tomb.

Know ye the fields that smooth the Pilgrim coast,
The lawn's soft slope in azure Ocean lost,
The garden bounded by the billow's foam,
The gables stately as a Baron's home?
Approach: along the corn-land and the wold,
October dies in crimson and in gold;
That giant elm has scarce a score of leaves
To shade the voiceless nest beneath the eaves.
See the bright Sabbath morning silent break,
Save where the wild-fowl fans his tiny lake,

Save where, with ceaseless wail, the warning sea
Chaunts its one awful word—"*Eternity.*"
Ah, Seth, unload the rifle—coil the line—
Let the coot fly—the haddock lash the brine—
O'er the mute hills, untracked, the wild deer run—
The Angler sleeps—thy Hunter's deeds are done!
Steal in with muffled tread—the struggle past,
Released from thought, the grand brow rests at last,
As rests in Abbey aisle some brave broad shield,
A nation's buckler on the battle-field.
No shroud surrounds him—he has gone to rest,
As heroes love to go, in harness drest:
Folded the hands that never rose in wrath
Unless to sweep a traitor from his path;
Dim the dark eye before whose rapt command
Disunion, like a spectre, fled the land.

God grant that JULIA's self the father meet
Since JULIA's image may no longer greet!
God guard that willowed slab by MARSHFIELD's wave,
Where *He still lives* beneath his laurelled grave!
God send some faithful heart, some fearless spur,
To fill the void of that one Sepulchre!
The Forum yawns! Come Curtius, to thy work!
Fate summons the COLLEGIAN—not the Clerk.

Green be the Hero's grave!—But who shall paint
Our greater loss—that purer gem—the SAINT?
We who are wholly plunged in pious labors,
Who plume ourselves and meekly peck our neighbors;

Whose outward life, so gravely circumspect,
Proclaims—our title clear—the sole Elect;
We who, knee-deep in spiritual feasts,
Bewail the shallower ecstasies of Priests;
We who serenely chaunt the rights of laymen
While pastors starve and Bishops drudge like
draymen;
We have no sins—no zealots that behold
A Creamcheese in each shepherd of the
fold,—
No pale *dèvôtes* to chronicle the fancies
That gild the seraph lips of Father Francis.
The fiery Frank may fall, the Spaniard slip,
O'er Pagan shafts the stumbling Roman trip,
The sturdy Belgian truckle to the State,
But Yankee Papists are immaculate.
We shrink from Sue and Sand, our only care is
To sigh with Kempis, or to sift with Suarez;
With fiction false to faith we never grovel,
Our lightest reading, the religious novel;

We count our soul-refreshing tales by scores,
Where heroes sin not—save in being bores;
Where heroines sing like controversial linnets,
Converting heretics in twenty minutes,—
Here Agnes answers to the Convent Bell-
There jilted William meditates a cell.
But let a Man stand up and lash the age,
Let reason rule and truth inspire his page,
Let folly quake to hear his lordly tread,
And captive error hang her hydra head;
Then, just so long as our celestial selves
Escape a drubbing, BROWNSON tops our shelves;
But once the scourge on our own shoulders laid—
Stop the Review!—gag the gray Renegade!

Yes, praised be type and steam, our blindness o'er
The Catholic world is wiser than of yore.

No simple Barons now corrupt the Church
By leaving rich relations in the lurch;
No stricken Knight, with half remembered prayer,
Beats his broad breast and makes a Monk his heir.
Fie, fie, Sir Hugo, like a cut-throat live,
Then, dying, *bribe* thy Maker to forgive?
Tempt not the skies with gifts,—*we* never do—
Heaven asks no largess—just a tear or two.
Our peaceful fingers guiltless of the sword,
What call for alms to pacify the Lord?
The Priest stands ready harnessed—naught to pay
Since he who gave, disdains to take away.
Let pompous heretics by will provide
For School and Mission,—*we* have no such pride.
Enough for us, our earthly errand run,
To pass an untithed purse from sire to son.

Too modest to bestow lest men applaud,
Faith just too feeble to invest with God;
Just zeal sufficient to shun godless knowledge,
And just too little to endow a College,
Hugo may pamper Abbots with his acres,
Ours shall be anybody's—but our Maker's.

In darker Ages, when the morning dews
Of Faith were fresh upon the world, when pews
Were yet unborn, our simple fathers thought—
Such ignorance belongs to souls untaught—
That the true aim of pious decoration
Should be the Minster—not the congregation.
Since then, the riper Flock far wiser grown,
Neat brick and mortar mimic chiselled stone;
Yon altar angel kneels in florid plaster
Where cherub wings once shone in alabaster.
But let the ceiling gape, the organ jingle,
The lazy spire at last ascend in shingle;

Glance down the nave—survey the sacred
scene—
One billowy sweep of lace and crinoline;
Each tiny hat half hidden in its feather,
Bright as a daisy beaming through the
heather—
Out with the Rose or Oriel's lesser lustre,
Here all the colors of the rainbow cluster.
Yet say not Faith hath wholly quenched her
fires
When Albany's Twin Minsters lift their spires,
When fast responsive to the Mitre's beck,
Each man stands ready with his cheerful
check;
Prompt as the Spartan at his country's call,
A hundred come—a hundred thousand fall.

When the good Caliph all his coffers brought,
And, gem in hand, his turbaned craftsmen
wrought;

When vainly jewelled with a Kingdom's store
The unfinished window clamored still for more,
Aladdin called the Spirit that begun
His radiant Palace, and the work was done.
So here the sail may gleam, the minstrel sing,
The Forum close, the victor warrior bring
His wreath,—but still the Temple of our sires
An Artist mightier than man requires.
We too must call our Spirit. Glance around—
The terrace at our feet is hallowed ground:
Climb that green hill,—those levelled walks that glide
Around the Chapel—by the torrent's side;
That shaded mound where still the Grotto stands—
All these are relics now, touched by the hands
That led alike the shriven soul to grace,
Or smoothed the frown from Nature's erring face.

Question the valley—hear how oft there trod,
Missal in hand, along the weary road,
A swift, frail shape, on some new mercy bent,
That seemed to smile with angels as it went.
Go farther—pierce the aching world beyond
The circle of those calm blue lines that bound
This Sanctuary—count the mitres—scan
The vast results of that one Heaven-sent man:
Ask mountain laymen, deep in stocks or deeds,
Why still they wear their medals, tell their beads;
Ask that gray band of Priests what trumpet call
Beneath Christ's standard ranged and armed them all;
Ask either Prelate whose command controls
The Christian being of a million souls,
Who first inspired his half unconscious feet
To tread the heights where flamed the Paraclete?

Hark! Prelate, Laymen, Priest, together say—
The Angel Guardian of the Mount—BRUTÉ.

My friends, Aladdin's Palace needs such men—
The SAINT at work, 'tis finished—not till then.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

Form L9–100m-9,'52(A3105)444

THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Miles -
Christine.

PS
2393
M594c